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FREDERIC LATIMER:

OR, THE

HISTORY

OF A

YOUNG MAN OF FASHION.

Ætas parentum pejor avis tulit
Nos nequiores, mox daturos
Progeniem vitioſiorem.

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CHAP. XX.

FREDERIC, in a few days, began the œconomical arrangements which the alteration in his circumſtances required. The reaſon prevented his regretting the abandonment of thoſe luxuries to which he had been accuſtomed, and the change never coſt him a ſigh. He removed to cheaper lodgings, no longer frequented the dinner clubs to which he belonged,

and diſmiſſed his ſervant. By theſe retrenchments he endeavoured to remedy the diminution of his income. As he avoided public places on account of the expence, the only amuſements of which he partook were the aſſemblies of women of faſhion, at which, on account of his birth, his elegant figure, and his profeſſion, he was always a welcome gueſt. He was dining one day at the Guard, when he was aſked by a borther officer if he was going to Mrs. Bumton's ball. "No," ſaid Frederick, "I "am not invited." "Then," continued the officer, "I ſuppoſe "you are an old acquaintance." "By no means," anſwered Latimer, who ſmiled with aſtoniſhment at the reaſon aſſigned, "I never even ſaw "the

"the lady." "If you are really in "earneſt," rejoined the firſt ſpeaker, "I will introduce you. But is it "poſſible that you have not heard of "the ſyſtem introduced this winter "by a ſet of people whom we call, "*The New Englanders*, rich vul- "gars, who kindly cram the faſhion- "able world with green peas, French "beans, ſtrawberries, pine-apples, "and peaches at Chriſtmas, on the "eaſy condition of miſtaking their "ſplendid houſes for taverns and "hotels, which they *good-naturedly* "empty of their own friends to make "room for our's? Society has un- "dergone a total revolution, and "is now divided into the invitors, "the invited, and the givers. The "peerage ſupplies the firſt, youth

" and idleneſs the ſecond, and trade
" the laſt. This Mrs. Bumton was
" the perſon who introduced this very
" uſeful arrangement, at a moment
" when increaſing taxation was likely
" to have baniſhed gaiety from the
" circles of faſhion; and as her hiſ-
" tory may perhaps entertain you,
" I will give it to you.—I ſhould
" begin with telling you, that her
" family conſiſts of herſelf and three
" nieces.

" This reſpectable Lady is the
" maiden ſiſter of an Iriſh adven-
" turer, whoſe early ſituation in life
" was the humble capacity of a foot-
" boy. He next, I know not by what
" fortunate accident, became a ſilver-
" ſmith in Dublin, then broke, and
" went on board a Guinea-man. In

" ſome

" ſome of his expeditions to the Weſt
" Indies, he procured the appoint-
" ment of *taſk-maſter* on a plantation,
" to which his diſpoſition was admi-
" rably calculated, and was at length
" named overſeer of the ſame eſtate.
" His employer died. The widow,
" to whom he left his whole fortune,
" became enamoured of her Hiber-
" nian agent; and as he had no ob-
" jection to her property, though
" her perſon was not very tempting,
" the union took place. The lady
" did not long live to enjoy the hap-
" pineſs ſhe expected in the arms of
" her ſecond huſband. The ill-na-
" tured world report that Mr. Bum-
" ton, uſed to the diſcipline of the
" ſlaves, had, by extending that ſyſ-
" tem to his wife, ſhortened the days

" of his former miſtreſs. Be that as
" it may, he remained maſter of her
" riches, and ſoon returned to his
" native country, to diſplay the
" ſplendor of affluence where he had
" long experienced the chilling blaſts
" of poverty. On his arrival in Ire-
" land, he enquired for his ſiſter, the
" lady in queſtion, and found that
" ſhe had not advanced beyond the
" ſituation in which he left her, that
" of cook and houſekeeper in a gen-
" tleman's family. He removed her
" from thence; and placing her at
" the head of his table, brought
" home from the pariſh ſchool, where
" they had hitherto been educated,
" his three daughters by a former
" marriage, and ordered that they
" ſhould be given every kind of in-

" ſtruction. He only lived long
" enough to make theſe arrange-
" ments, and ſoon after died, leaving
" the whole of his property to be
" divided amongſt theſe girls, only
" ſubject to an annuity for life to
" their aunt, to whoſe guidance and
" protection he entruſted them.
" Mrs. Bumton, for ſo ſhe diſcreetly
" called herſelf though unmarried,
" found Dublin too near the ſeat
" of her former occupations to afford
" her an early agreeable reſidence.
" She removed to London with her
" nieces; and after having them
" taught the faſhionable accompliſh-
" ments of muſic, drawing and danc-
" ing, for *ſhe conſidered literature as*
" *beneath their notice*, ſhe was ex-
" tremely anxious that they ſhould

" be introduced into the world with
" *eclat*. The vulgarity of her man-
" ner, and the recollection of her for-
" mer ſituation, which was yet freſh
" in the memory of many perſons
" living, were much againſt the prac-
" ticability of this plan. Being
" known to be proficients in muſic,
" they were at firſt only invited to
" the ſupper-parties of *amateurs*, and
" were more than once taken for
" profeſſional fingers. By degrees
" they were admitted into the
" houſes of ſome perſons of re-
" ſpectability, who, admiring the
" beauty and the talents of the girls,
" on their account put up with the
" vulgarity, the ignorance, and the
" purſe-proud familiarity of the aunt.
" This did not ſatisfy the ambition of
" Mrs.

" Mrs. Bumton, ſhe wiſhed now to
" ſee her nieces preſented at court,
" and received into the higher circles
" of faſhion. As ſhe was not with-
" out art, ſhe contrived, by inceſſant
" attentions, and frequent preſents
" of rum, ſweetmeats, and Weſt
" Indian peppers, to procure the no-
" tice of a ſuperannuated Dowager of
" quality. At length ſhe ventured
" to propoſe to her the introduction
" of her nieces at St. James's. Lady
" Cambridge, who knew their whole
" hiſtory, ſmiled at the idea, but con-
" ſtantly preſſed, flattered, and en-
" treated, at laſt conſented. They
" were preſented, reputed to be
" great fortunes, and their dreſſes
" deſcribed at length in the papers
" of the following day. Mrs. Bum-
" ton

" ton took a large houſe, furniſhed
" it with great magnificence, and pre-
" pared to give ſumptuous enter-
" tainments. The Dowager was again
" conſulted about the company
" who were to be aſked, and when ſhe
" mentioned, as the condition of her
" interference, that Mrs. Bumton
" ſhould give up all her former ac-
" quaintance, ſhe found her perfectly
" willing to comply with the pro-
" poſal. Lady Cambridge then
" deigned to introduce moſt of her
" noble friends, who, tempted by the
" proſpect of the elegant balls their
" exertions were to produce, became
" recruiting officers in the ſervice.
" Whilſt the perſons who had origi-
" ginally received Mrs. Bumton, and
" her nieces, with hoſpitality and
" kindneſs,

" kindneſs, and at whoſe houſes they
" were firſt obſerved, were excluded
" from the liſt of the invited, theſe
" dignified ambaſſadors were en-
" treated to diſtribute her cards with
" liberal hand. By theſe means
" ſhe at laſt had the ſatisfaction of
" drawing together more perſons of
" faſhion than had ever yet been ſeen
" in a private room; and her firſt
" ball preſented the then ſingular
" phænomenon (now become com-
" mon by repetition) of an aſſembly,
" in which not one perſon, the Dow-
" ager excepted, knew the ladies of
" the houſe. *N'importe*, their object
" was anſwered, every body was of
" courſe introduced to them, every
" body laughed at them, but every
" body was extremely civil.

" This

"This is the ſecond ball; and as the "young ladies, as well as their aunt, "are grown finer than ever, they "have already made diſtinctions "amongſt their new acquaintance. "Some ſix or ſeven commoners crept "into the number of the company "laſt invited. This is a diſgrace "which the ſiſter and daughters of "a Weſt Indian taſk-maſter are de- "termined not to endure, and their "party, to-night, freed from the "impurity of plebeian intruſion, is "to be purely patrician! Indeed, if "you were not a ſprig of nobility "I ſhould not venture to introduce "you." Frederic laughed heartily at this deſcription, and readily accepted the offer of his friend. At twelve o'clock, for it would have been

been an offence to ſuppoſe that Mrs. Bumton's ball could begin at an earlier hour, they drove to her houſe in Groſvenor Square. As the officer, who was himſelf the brother of a peer, took care, in introducing Latimer, to add, "of the Coldſtream, "nephew to Lord Creſſey, and ſon "of the Ducheſs of Annan," he was moſt graciouſly received both by the aunt and the young ladies. Frederic could ſcarcely keep his countenance, as he made his bow to the former. Her hiſtory was called to his recollection by every motion. She was fat, coarſe, awkward, and gave perfectly the idea of a man in petticoats. She returned the addreſſes of her company with a condeſcending nod of protection, which ſhe ſuppoſed

the

the height of faſhionable eaſe. Her nieces had not her vulgarity, but they ſhared her vanity, and were as anxious as ſhe was to be conſidered the very quinteſſence of taſte and *haut ton*. They were all three elegantly dreſſed, and ſeemed to have ſpared no pains in rendering themſelves the counterparts of their noble viſitors. The eldeſt was really pretty, and Latimer put no reſtraint on his inclinations in aſking her to dance, an attention, he thought, due to her at her own houſe. The great object of theſe balls was to marry the young ladies to men of rank, for their fortune rendered them indifferent as to money; his requeſt therefore was readily granted, as the wiſhed-for prelude to a more intimate acquaintance.

Frederic

Frederic found her converſation not very intereſting, but this was a circumſtance to which he was too much accuſtomed, at aſſemblies of this kind, to be either ſurpriſed or diſappointed. He was highly amuſed with the different remarks of the perſons, who were introduced to Miſs Bumton, and he had ſome difficulty in refraining from laughter. One lady, after complimenting her on the beauty of her houſe, and the elegance of the ball, turned on her heel, and in a loud whiſper exclaimed, "Did you "ever ſee ſuch a lump of affectation? "They are altogether the moſt ridi- "culous family in London." — A noble duke, not in the prime of life, made his bow, retired one ſtep, drew out his opera glaſs, and declared her,

after

after an examination of five minutes, "to be tolerably paſſable." A daſhing young man of high ton, dreſſed in a tightly-buttoned coat, apparently ſupported by ſtays, low-collared cape, ſhort waiſt, and puckered ſleeves, his hair twiſted with ſtudied negligence in a thouſand different ringlets over his forehead, after accoſting her with great familiarity, turned round to Latimer, and aſked "if ſhe was not one of the "girls of the houſe?" adding, "I "think I cannot be wrong, ſhe ap-"pears ſo *curſedly* on the look-out." "Why, I thought from your man-"ner," ſaid Frederic, "you were "very intimate with her." "By no "means," replied the gallant youth, "I never ſaw her before this evening, "and only went up to her now to

"ſee

"ſee whether ſhe was or was not "handſome. I am told ſhe is *damned* "rich, and wants a huſband of "faſhion; I ſhould have no objec- "tion to take her myſelf, if that aunt "was not ſo confoundedly vulgar." He then ſtared Miſs Bumton once more in the face, and walked off.

Another youth, of equal ſtile, and equal impudence, throwing himſelf back in an arm chair with happy *nonchalence*, called out to one of the waiters, and aſked if he had long been in the family; and being anſwered in the affirmative, "Tell me, my good fellow," continued he, "which of "your young ladies do you recom- "mend? I have a mind to marry "one of them, and want your ad- "vice." The man, elevated by the

queſtion, put down the negus he was carrying, and aſſuming an air of conſequence, "Sir," ſaid he, "all the "Miſs Bumtons are grand and fine "enough to be ducheſſes; but if I "may be bold enough to ſpeak my "mind, the youngeſt, I ſay, for my "money. She is but ſixteen; to be "ſure five years are a long time to "wait; but then your honour knows "the ſavings will be double." "By "God!" replied the lordling, "you "are right. I will take your advice, "and poſtpone my declarations till "ſhe is of age."

Before Latimer had finiſhed his two dances, ſupper was announced, and he had the honour of handing his fair partner to her ſeat. He there found Mrs. Bumton in great diſtreſs.

The

The places deſtined for her moſt illuſtrious viſitors were already occupied by ſome of the leſs diſtinguiſhed part of the company. She in vain informed them, that the ducheſs of this, and the marchioneſs of that, were not yet ſeated. She expected that they, petrified, like herſelf, by ſuperior rank, would immediately have reſigned their comfortable ſituations at the table. In this hope ſhe was ſadly diſappointed, and the only anſwers ſhe received were, "I am "extremely ſorry, it is indeed very "unfortunate, what can be done?" She vented her indignation by declaring ſhe would never again aſk ſuch ill-bred people to her houſe; and entertained the ladies in queſtion

both with her anger and her apologies.

After ſupper the dancing recommenced, and the company did not ſeparate till a very late hour. Frederic had occaſion this evening to repeat a remark which had often ſtruck him in ſuch parties. Every body had called this a "good ball," yet there was little dancing, no gaiety, extreme heat, much crowding, and ſcarcely any apparent pleaſure. In what then did this *goodneſs* conſiſt? in the number of titled perſons, whoſe names, each individual's vanity was flattered in being able to couple with his own the following day, though many of them were as notorious for every breach of decency, virtue,

virtue, and morality, as they were elevated in rank. Such is faſhionable life! Such are the amuſements of refined ſociety!

Though Frederic thought little more of Miſs Bumton, ſhe had not received the common attentions, he thought it right that evening to ſhew her, with indifference. His handſome perſon, his elegant manner, and his near alliance with two families of elevated rank, rendered him in every reſpect an object worthy her ambition. Her aunt approved the thought, and determined to cultivate the intimacy by every means in her power. Latimer was favoured with repeated invitations to parties, ſuppers, concerts, and dinners. Though not man was leſs vain, it was impoſ-

ſible for him to miſtake the marked civilities of Mrs. and Miſs Bumton, and his friends began to joke him on his ſucceſs.

Frederic was in circumſtances, in which no one but himſelf could have reſiſted ſuch a temptation. Reduced to a miſerable pittance, a fine young girl, and thirty thouſand pounds, ſeemed to ſolicit his acceptance. Latimer was very different from the reſt of the world; romantic and generous in all his ideas, he held it criminal to offer his hand where his heart could not accompany it, and he ſpurned the intereſted reaſons on which this match was recommended. Charlotte too! the injured Charlotte, was ſtill preſent in his mind; and though he could not flatter himſelf with ever

aſpiring

aſpiring to call her his, after the guilty violation of his engagement in the caſe of Lady Ann, yet he determined never to repeat the offence; and he felt a ſecret rapture in ſwearing fidelity to one from whom he dared not hope a return. Urged by theſe motives, he avoided the ſociety of the Bumtons, and ſent excuſes to their never-ceaſing invitations.

CHAP. XXI.

AT the moment when Frederic declined this advantageous marriage, his pecuniary affairs were at the loweſt ebb. He found that, notwithſtanding the ſyſtem of œconomy which he had adopted, notwithſtanding the ſacrifices he had made and the expences he had avoided, it was impoſſible for him to live on his reduced income whilſt he continued in the Guards. Thus circumſtanced, he determined to exchange into a marching regiment, and by ſerving his country abroad, to render himſelf of ſome uſe to ſociety. He

eaſily

eaſily gained permiſſion to purchaſe a company in an old corps ordered to the Weſt Indies. His commiſſion was ſigned, and every preparation made for his departure, when he received a note from the Ducheſs of Annan, acquainting him that her ſon, the Marquis of Dunkeld, was taken ſuddenly ill, and that ſhe entreated him to poſtpone his voyage. Frederic was both ſurpriſed and alarmed at this intelligence: he had, only the night before, taken his leave of the Duke and Ducheſs, and his brother was then in perfect health, preparing for a child's ball given by the Ducheſs of Pairham. He immediately went to Annan-Houſe, and found the family in great agitation: he enquired for Lord Dunkeld; the houſe-

ſteward,

ſteward, a venerable old man, ſhook his head. "Heavens!" cried Frederic, "what has happened? explain this "dreadful ſilence!" "Ah, Sir," replied he, "can you believe it, my poor "young Lord is no more; laſt night "he was as well as you are, in the "heyday of youth and ſpirits; he "now lies a lifeleſs corpſe! he heated "himſelf at the ball, to which he "was going when you were here, and "afterwards ate too plentifully of "ice. He felt himſelf indiſpoſed, "and was brought home: a phy-"ſician was ſent for; every aſſiſtance "was given in vain; all night he "was in excruciating agonies; the "fever encreaſed every moment; he "became delirious, and at length, one "hour ſince, died in theſe arms!"

The

The old man ſobbed as he finiſhed this ſad tale; and Frederic, no leſs affected, was for ſome moments inſenſible: rouſed, at laſt, to recollection, he enquired for his mother, and learned that ſhe was in the utmoſt deſpair. She had aſked for him more than once; he obeyed the painful ſummons, and was ſhewn to her apartment. The Ducheſs of Annan, whoſe feelings were always violent, was giving way to her grief, tearing her hair, and with frantic ſteps pacing the room: when ſhe ſaw Frederic ſhe flew into his arms, and ſeemed to eaſe her heart in weeping on his boſom. Latimer, little uſed to ſo affectionate an addreſs from his mother, was ſurpriſed, and trembled leſt he ſhould

ſhould offend in returning her embrace: "Oh, Frederic! ſaid ſhe, "you are now my only ſon, for God's "ſake do not leave me!"

Latimer ſighed, and was ſilent.

"Heavens," cried the Ducheſs, "you do not ſurely perſevere in your "mad plan of going to the Weſt "Indies?" "I wiſh, Madam," replied Frederic, "ſince you deſire it, "that it were poſſible to ſtay; unfor-"tunately it does not depend on "me; the regiment is already on "board of ſhip."

"What does that ſignify? reſign "your commiſſion; it can be of no "importance to you now."

"Conſider, Madam, my honour."

"Talk not to me of honour!" cried

cried the terrified mother, "filial "duties ſupercede all others, and I "command you not to go."

Frederic knew the violence of her temper too well to diſpute her wiſhes thus poſitively expreſſed; and as her preſent ſituation required delicacy, he determined to aſſume the appearance of conceſſion, though he was reſolved that no conſideration ſhould make him diſgrace his character by deſerting the ſervice he had choſen. Thinking ſhe had ſucceeded, ſhe became more calm, and he left her tolerably compoſed. Though Frederic ſincerely pitied the heavy misfortune which the Ducheſs of Annan had experienced, he could not help viewing with aſtoniſhment the inconſiſtency of her conduct towards himſelf;

himſelf; only two days ago, ſhe heard of his intended departure for the Weſt Indies with indifference, and out of the ſuperfluity of her wealth, offered not a ſmall addition to his income, which would have rendered the exchange unneceſſary. She now viewed his voyage with the utmoſt horror, and was ready to make any ſacrifice to prevent it. Was it affection or pride which dictated her conduct? It was true that in this interval ſhe had loſt her favourite ſon; but had ſhe loved him with the tenderneſs which became a parent, could ſhe ever have made the diſtinction? It was clear that he owed the intereſt which ſhe now expreſſed for him to the latter motive; and ſhe, probably, had already formed

ſome

ſome ambitious hopes of raiſing up a new family in him.

When Frederic made theſe reflections, he felt leſs inclination than before to neglect his duty in compliance with her wiſhes. He ſtayed three days longer in London, and then finding that her ſpirits began to be compoſed (for, as we mentioned before, her grief, exceſſive at firſt, was never of long continuance) he wrote to the Duke of Annan, entreating him to explain his conduct, and, a few hours after, ſet ſail with his regiment for the Weſt Indies.

CHAP. XXII.

AFTER a tempeſtuous voyage, Frederic and his men reached the iſland of Martinique, to which they were deſtined. They were immediately ſent on active ſervice, and Latimer had more than one opportunity of diſtinguiſhing himſelf. In every attempt of danger, he was always foremoſt, and he frequently volunteered a forlorn hope. Nothing could be more ſevere, than the duty which the military were called upon to perform; expoſed to the noon-day ſun of that burning climate, harraſſed by troops uſed to the country, and their numbers every hour diminiſhed by ſick-

neſs or death, it required the moſt dauntleſs ſpirit, the moſt unſhaken fortitude, and the ſtrongeſt conſtitution, to endure the evils which ſurrounded them. Frederic, naturally robuſt, active, and courageous, bore the fatigues of duty and the dangers of war, with unexampled heroiſm; but his heart was not callous to the miſery of others, and whilſt fear was a ſtranger to his breaſt, he was deeply affected by the conſtant ſcenes of deſolation, death and diſeaſe, which he beheld around him. Wherever they marched, they either retraced a ravaged country, or themſelves were directed to deſtroy. Every day, ſome of their body, worn out by the ſeve-

rity of the ſervice, or the heat of the climate, found a premature grave.

At length, as if they were not already ſubjected to calamities of ſufficient cruelty, the yellow-fever appeared amongſt the troops. Frederic expoſed himſelf, perpetually, to the attacks of this fatal diſtemper, by an inceſſant attention to thoſe who were its victims. Whilſt others fled the tainted touch of their companions, the moment the too well-known ſymptoms appeared, Latimer was ever ready to afford the ſuccours of friendſhip, even to the loweſt of his ſoldiers. Yet from the goodneſs of his conſtitution and the temperance of his habits, he eſcaped the dire contagion, and after ſeeing half his men and moſt

of

of his brother-officers carried off by this all-devouring evil, he at length was ordered with the few effective men of his company to leave Martinique, and to embark for St. Vincent's. A new kind of warfare attended him in the latter iſland, and he had at once to contend with the intemperance of the climate, the deſolation of the fever which raged there with equal violence, and the ſavage barbarity of the Charibs. The remainder of his little corps were gradually falling victims to theſe united dangers, and his generous heart, driven to deſpair by the daily loſs of his dear companions, and the outrages to humanity which ſurrounded him on all ſides, was almoſt ſinking under the load of care, when

he himſelf, who had ſo long and ſo fortunately eſcaped, was attacked with the ſymptoms of this fatal diſtemper. He ſoon became delirious, and loſt all recollection of what was paſſing. After lying two days in this ſtate, without ſenſe of feeling, he awoke, as it were, from a long ſleep. He tried to recollect where he was. He had a confuſed remembrance of being ill, but all his ideas were imperfect. He looked anxiouſly round for information, and thought he beheld near his bed a face which was familiar to him. Again he gazed wiſhfully, and at laſt recollecting that the perſon whoſe countenance he fancied he beheld was far, far diſtant, exclaimed in a diſappointed accent, "Oh happy dream! flattering "deluſion!

" deluſion! why did you leave me?
" I imagined I ſaw before me Edward
" Deering, what would I not give to
" realize the phantom!" " No, Fre-
" deric," replied a voice he thought he could not miſtake, " it is no fic-
" tion; you ſee your friend, no longer
" miſerable ſince you are well enough
" once again to recognize him." Latimer jumped from his pillow in an exſtacy of joy, and Deering trembling for a relapſe, with difficulty reſtrained his violence. After uſing much entreaty, he at laſt perſuaded him to ſuſpend his curioſity on the ſubject of his arrival till the next day. Cured of his diſeaſe, animated by the ſight of ſo dear an object, but weakened by the exertion he had gone

through, he fell into an involuntary ſlumber, and did not awake, till a late hour the following morning. He was ſo much refreſhed by this ſleep, that Deering no longer refuſed to account for his ſudden appearance. "Shortly then, my dear Frederic," ſaid he "when I heard of your de-
"parture from England, I gueſſed
"the cauſe, and determined to fol-
"low you. I waited however till I
"had procured the means of remedy-
"ing the evil which your raſh kind-
"neſs to me had occaſioned. At
"length my father received a remit-
"tance from the Weſt Indies. I
"flew with it to your mother. She
"condeſcended to ſee me. Her let-
"ter will explain the reſt. I hope
"you

" you will excuſe my having acted
" for you on this occaſion without
" your orders. When at laſt I had
" negociated the buſineſs as I wiſhed,
" and ſecured your return to Eng-
" land, with honor, I determined to
" be myſelf the meſſenger of an in-
" telligence, which I hoped would
" give you pleaſure, and in this ſad
" climate, to expreſs my gratitude
" before your departure. Alas! what
" were my feelings in finding you
" already attacked by the fatal fever,
" and deprived of ſenſe. I ſent im-
" mediately to my father's eſtate,
" fortunately ſituated in this neigh-
" bourhood, procured the little com-
" forts which your illneſs required,
" and the advice of the phyſician at-

" tendant on the property. To his " ſkill, for he has been many years " accuſtomed to the climate, do I " attribute your recovery, and I know " not how ſufficiently to expreſs my " joy at being thus the accidental " cauſe of your eſcape."—" Oh, Ed- " ward, how ſhall I thank you," ex- claimed the grateful Latimer; " my " life ſaved by you will be doubly " valuable."—" Pain me not," replied Deering, " by talking of thanks; you " owe me nothing; for me you ha- " zarded this fatal expedition; had " you fallen, how could I have for- " given myſelf? No, Frederic, the " obligation is ſtill entirely on your " ſide, and believe me I never ſhall " forget it."

When

When Frederic was ſufficiently recovered to attend to buſineſs, a packet of letters, which Edward Deering had brought with him from England, was put into his hands. The well-known writing of Mr. Darewell firſt drew his attention. He almoſt feared to open the cover. He had both exchanged his regiment, and ſet out for the Weſt Indies, without conſulting him on the ſubject; and though his motive was an amiable one, that of giving him as little uneaſineſs as poſſible, he trembled leſt he ſhould have conſtrued this omiſſion into diſreſpect and ingratitude. The kind and affectionate ſtile of his guardian referring him to his mother's letter, and entreating him to return home

as

as ſoon as poſſible, ſoon eaſed his mind on that point. From the elder Deering, from whom, as well as his ſon, he had concealed his voyage, and the reaſon which occaſioned it, out of motives of delicacy, he received a letter full of gratitude, and expreſſing his full approbation of the conduct of Edward, in determining to ſeek his friend and benefactor.

Theſe tributes of kind remembrance and unceaſing regard, were welcome to the heart of Frederic, and, united to the preſence of Edward, were the beſt congratulations he could receive on his recovery. He next opened the letter from his mother. It began, as he expected, with accuſing him of his breach of promiſe, in leaving Eng-

land. It then ſtated, that the death of lord Dunkeld had had ſo violent an effect on the Duke of Annan, whoſe health was declining at the time, that he had grown worſe every day, and that ſhe ſcarcely expected him to ſurvive the following month. She then informed him, that having enquired, by the deſire of Mr. Edward Deering, how he could return to England with moſt reputation to himſelf, ſhe was told that promotion at home was the beſt and moſt agreeable way by which this purpoſe could be effected, and in conſequence of ſuch advice, by the payment of a large ſum of money remitted to her on his account by Mr. Deering, ſenior, and the exertion of much intereſt,

ſhe

ſhe had ſucceeded in getting him reinſtated in the guards, with the rank he now held in the army. His leave of abſence was encloſed from the commander in chief, and the Ducheſs entreated him to return, with every poſſible expedition, to the fond arms of an affectionate mother. This was the firſt kind letter he had ever received from his only parent, and though he believed vanity had ſome concern in her motives, he could not help feeling gratified at a teſtimonial of regard from ſo near a relation, to which, during all his former life, he had been a ſtranger. Nor was he leſs happy in being enabled to quit, with honour, the Weſt Indies. He had loſt all the friends who had accompanied

companied him from England, he was diſguſted with every thing around him, and had no object of intereſt, but the phyſician who had ſaved his life: with him, he parted with regret; his tender care left a pleaſing reflection on his mind, but every other circumſtance he wiſhed to drive from his memory.

He took advantage of the firſt veſſel which ſailed for England; and after an abſence of fifteen months, at length reached Briſtol in ſafety, accompanied by Edward Deering.

CHAP. XXIII.

IT was December when they arrived; heavy ſnows had fallen, and the roads were almoſt impaſſable. Delighted at being once more in England, Frederic laughed at theſe little difficulties, and ordering a chaiſe-and-four, ſet out, though in the middle of the night, for London, where he knew he was anxiouſly expected. Deering did not accompany him further than Bath, having a dear friend to viſit there, who was impatient for his return. After travelling all that night and the ſucceeding day, Latimer found himſelf, as it grew dark, ſtill at

at a conſiderable diſtance from town, the roads growing worſe every mile. He was too impatient to ſtop, and after much perſeverance at length got to London about four o'clock in the morning.

As he drove along Piccadilly, he perceived flames of fire iſſuing from a houſe apparently in the neighbourhood. He trembled for the unhappy beings who at this late hour, and at a ſeaſon when all the pipes were neceſſarily frozen, were expoſed to ſo dreadful a calamity. He ſtopped his chaiſe, and enquired of the watchmen where the fire was ſuppoſed to be. They informed him that a houſe had been burning more than half an hour in Berkley Square, and

and that the engines had not yet been able to play, owing to the want of water. Alarmed ſtill more at the account, Latimer ordered the poſt-boys immediately to drive to the place deſcribed by the watchmen, and he encouraged their diligence by the promiſe of a bribe. As he entered the ſquare, he beheld the flames ruſhing with tremenduous fury from a large building near the center. He jumped from his chaiſe and ran to the ſpot. He looked with anxious attention to the windows, and thought he diſtinguiſhed a human figure; he looked again, he certainly was right, and by the form it appeared to be a woman. The fireman told him ſhe was a female whom they in vain had entreated

entreated to make uſe of a ladder, which they purpoſely procured and fixed to the wall. "She obſtinately," ſaid they, "perſiſts in ſtaying where "ſhe is, and beckons us to go up; in "doing ſo, we ſhould venture our "own lives without being of any uſe "to her, for the beams are already "giving way." This was ſufficient to the humane, the dauntleſs Frederic. He ſeized the ladder, and running rapidly up the ſteps, ſoon reached the top. He found the almoſt lifeleſs figure ſtill at the window, watching with anxious eye his arrival. He caught her in his arms, and attempted to remove her from this ſeat of peril, but borrowing ſtrength from the moment, ſhe puſh-

ed him from her, and clinging round a cheſt of drawers which ſtood near her, ſhe exclaimed, in a voice of extreme horror, the notes of which were ſtill familiar to his ear, "Save! O ſave "my father!" A flaſh of light now ſtruck across her face. Heavens! was it poſſible? his eye, his ear, his heart, all told him it was Charlotte, his long loſt Charlotte. Forgetting where they were, he began to expreſs his joy; a falling beam reminded him of their danger. Again ſhe refuſed to move; and again entreated him to preſerve her father. Mighty God! was he miſtaken? Charlotte had no father. There was not time to explain the myſtery; nor prayer, nor force, could make her ſtir. Find-

ing

ing both in vain, he ran to a room ſhe pointed out, where lay a venerable old gentleman, apparently confined by the gout. He exhorted his daughter to make her eſcape; and giving her his bleſſing, aſſured her he was prepared to meet his fate. Frederic ſaw the time admitted of no delay. Neither entreaty nor ſtrength could move the daughter. "Come "Sir," ſaid he, "accept my aſſiſtance, "for your child's ſake heſitate not a "moment." So ſaying, he placed him on his back, and with cautious ſteps, and no inconſiderable difficulty, deſcended the ladder. As he reached the bottom, a frantic ſhriek ſtruck his terrified ear; he liſtened; it certainly came from the ſame tender

voice. The crowd below declared that the young lady had at laſt fallen a victim to her obſtinacy. Frederic laid the old gentleman on a feather bed which had been placed to receive the unhappy ſufferers, and again ſnatched the ladder. The firemen tried to diſſuade him, but forcing them from him, he quickly aſcended, determined to ſave her, or periſh in the attempt. She was no longer at the window; he called; no voice anſwered his enquiry; he ventured to the room where he found her father; the floor had fallen in. "Mighty God! was ſhe loſt? was it Charlotte? was ſhe only brought to his view to be ſnatched from him for ever?" Rendered deſperate, he was determined

mined to bury himſelf in the ruins; when once again approaching the window where firſt he ſaw her, he perceived an inanimate form lying near it. He looked; it was the ſame figure; and O! horror! ſhe was dead! He took her in his arms, and in an agony of grief was deploring his hapleſs fate, when he thought ſhe breathed. Exalted to the higheſt pinnacle of hope, he flew with her to the place where he had left the ladder. It was no longer there; it had been removed to afford aſſiſtance in another quarter. At length, after a moment of awful ſuſpenſe, a ladder was again fixed. He took the ſtill lifeleſs form in his arms, and hur-

ried down the ſteps. In leſs than five minutes more the whole building fell in. Overpowered by his ſurpriſe, his exertions, and his joy, Frederic himſelf now became inſenſible, and loſt all recollection of what was paſſing.

CHAP. XXIV.

WHEN Frederic recovered his reaſon, he found that he was in bed in a ſtrange place, and perceived he was conſiderably bruiſed. He rang a bell which was near him, and enquired where he was. He was informed that he was at Dorrant's Hotel, in Albermarle Street; to which the firemen and poſt-boys had conducted him. He then anxiouſly enquired for the lady and her father who had ſo narrowly eſcaped the fire. "I ſuppoſe "you mean my Lord Duke and "his daughter?" ſaid the waiters.

"Am I then" cried Frederic, beating his head in an agony of deſpair, "at laſt diſappointed? I did "not think it poſſible that more "than one human being ſhould poſ-"ſeſs that ſerenity of countenance, "that melody of voice, which nearly "ſeven years abſence has not ob-"literated from my memory."

A note was now delivered to him, which encreaſed his ſurpriſe.

"Dorrant's Hotel, Saturday morning.

"The Duke of Annan regrets, "ſincerely, that his continued lame-"neſs, which the accident of laſt "night has encreaſed, puts it out of "his power to wait on the gentle-"man who ſo generouſly ſaved his "life, and that of his daughter. He

"entreats

"entreats him to have the goodneſs "of coming to his apartment, that "he may have an opportunity of ex- "preſſing all his gratitude; and of "forming an acquaintance with the "man to whom he owes not only his "own life, but, what is infinitely "more dear to him, that of his "child."

Frederic, loſt in myſtery, knew not what to think. There certainly was but one Duke of Annan. Was his father-in-law dead? his mother's letter ſpoke of that event as likely to happen; if ſo, who was his ſucceſſor? his ſon died before he left England, and he did not remember that he had a brother. The more he reflected, the more he was at a loſs to

unravel

unravel this ſtrange, this incomprehenſible adventure. He determined however to bring it to an immediate termination by accepting the invitation of the new Duke of Annan, of whom he had never before heard. When he attempted to riſe he could not move, having ſprained his ancle in jumping from the ladder the preceding night. Even this he reſolved ſhould not keep him from paying the intended viſit. He put on his clothes, and ſending for two of the waiters, ordered them to carry him to the apartment of the Duke of Annan. Fearing leſt his preſent ſituation ſhould alarm the young lady, whoſe great reſemblance to Charlotte rendered her ſo intereſting to his heart,

heart, he ſent in word, that having ſlightly hurt his leg, which prevented his walking, he begged permiſſion to be brought into the room in a chair. Notwithſtanding this preparation, ſhe gave a ſcream on beholding her deliverer thus ſupported; the ſound of which reminded him of Charlotte's well-remembered voice. He again gazed with an attentive eye on every feature; every feature was the ſame, only ſtrengthened and improved into maturity. "I beg your pardon, Madam," ſaid Frederic, "for this "intruſion, and ſtill more ſo, for the "particular manner in which I pre-"ſume to look at you; but you are "really ſo like a very dear friend "whom I have loſt, that I can ſcarcely "believe

" believe that I am miſtaken; yet
" your rank, your ſituation in life,
" your father, all deny the poſſibility
" of a fact which my ſenſes of ſight
" and hearing every inſtant ſeem to
" confirm. I feel I am very impertı-
" nent, but if you would explain how
" long you have been in this country,
" and ſince when your father has
" borne the title of Annan, you would
" do me an eſſential obligation." It was long before the young lady was ſufficiently recovered from her ſurpriſe and her alarm to have uſe of ſpeech. At length, ſummoning reſolution, ſhe ventured to ſay, " Oh,
" Sir! you have ſaved my life, you
" have done more, you have ſaved
" my father! what favour can you

" aſk

"ask which it will not be my duty to "grant?

"As to the myſtery of which you "ſpeak, I am not leſs aſtoniſhed "than yourſelf. You are the very "counterpart of the friend of my "early youth. If I did not know he "was far, far diſtant," and a tear dropped from her eye, "alas! perhaps "no more, I ſhould think I now "ſpoke to—to—," ſhe heſitated, and at length added, "Frederic Latimer."

"Mighty God!" exclaimed the enraptured Frederic, "how ſhall I "endure my happineſs? what do I "hear? can it be you? do I indeed "behold my Charlotte? does ſhe "ſtill deign to recollect the long-ab-"ſent partner of her youth? Yes,

"Charlotte,

" Charlotte, you ſee before you the
" unworthy object about whoſe fate
" you have declared yourſelf not in-
" different, unchanged in affection,
" though guilty of innumerable, of
" unpardonable faults." He would have thrown himſelf at her feet, but he found he could not move. Charlotte was ſcarcely able to endure the exceſs of joy ſhe now experienced: ſhe had diſcovered her lover in her preſerver, the ſaviour of her father. His regard was unaltered; and ſhe could return his love without bluſhing at the inferiority of birth, which ſhe once thought would ſeparate her from him for ever. She hoped alſo that he was poor, that ſhe might have the additional pleaſure of enriching

riching him by her choice. Theſe united ſenſations found vent in tears; and it was long before ſhe was ſufficiently herſelf to anſwer the anxious enquiries of Frederic. At length with a faltering accent, "excuſe," ſaid ſhe, "my involuntary weakneſs; I "am ſo ſurpriſed, ſo agitated, that "I know not what to ſay. This "paper," drawing one from her pocket, "which my father inſiſted "on my taking charge of when "the fire was firſt perceived, will "explain to you his hiſtory and mine. "Whilſt you read the contents, I "will run to him and tell him who "you are; I am ſure he will feel an "additional ſatisfaction in owing "his life to that Frederic of whom

"he

"he has heard my mother ſo often
"ſpeak with the affection of a parent."
So ſaying, ſhe laid the paper on the table, and went into an adjoining room, where the Duke of Annan was ſtill in bed.

Frederic, overcome with pleaſure and ſurpriſe, could ſcarcely believe that what had juſt paſt was real; the whole appeared a delightful fiction, and he almoſt feared to open the paper which had been delivered to him, leſt it ſhould break the charm of his preſent happineſs.

He at length looked into the contents, and read as follows:

"Madras, June 17—

"Having ſerved ſome years in the
"army of the Eaſt India Company
"under

"under the assumed name of Mur-
"ray, I think it right to leave this
"document, that in case of my
"death, my dear wife may be able
"to prove the legitimacy of my
"child, and may claim the rights
"and privileges to which, by her
"birth, she may be entitled. I
"was the second son of the eighth
"Duke of Annan. My father and
"my mother both died when I was
"very young, leaving only my elder
"brother and myself. According to
"the custom of my country, my pa-
"trimony, as a younger son, was ex-
"tremely small, and the expensive
"style of my education, did not
"render me particularly prudent in
"the use of it. At sixteen I was

" placed in the army, and ſerved ſome
" years. Diſguſted with a profeſſion
" in which I had experienced ſeveral
" diſappointments, I ſold my commiſ-
" ſion, and determined to drop the
" title, which is uſually given to the
" ſons of Dukes, ſince it obliged me
" to live in the manner which I had
" not the means of ſupporting. Under
" the borrowed name of 'Murray',
" I retired into Cumberland, and lay-
" ing out part of my little fortune
" in ſtocking a farm which I had
" hired, and on which was ſituated a
" ſmall but neat cottage, I truſted
" the remainder to a perſon who had
" been formerly ſteward to my father,
" and who was now a conſiderable
" manufacturer in London. I reſolved

" to

"to conceal from the whole world "the hiſtory of my birth, and to "ſeek for happineſs in the tranquil "ſcenes of ruſtic life; I ſoon became "acquainted with the moſt amiable "of her ſex. Charlotte Darewell "was the daughter of a reſpectable "merchant, who had left off buſineſs, "and ſettled like myſelf, from mo-"tives of œconomy, in that part of "the country. I had the ſatisfaction "of gaining her affections, unbiaſſed "by the attractions of rank. She "loved me for myſelf, and conſented "to ſhare my little fortune. We "were married, and three years of "tranquil enjoyment flew rapidly "away. During this period, Char-"lotte, my dear and only child, was

" born. At the beginning of the
" fourth year, I received a letter which
" taught me the fatal imprudence
" of which I had been guilty, in truſt-
" ing my money to a perſon concerned
" in trade. My father's former ſtew-
" ard became a bankrupt, and my
" little all was ſwallowed up in his
" ruin. I concealed from my wife
" the cauſe of my grief, and ſimply
" ſaying, that I had buſineſs of im-
" portance to tranſact, went to Lon-
" don. On my arrival, I found I had
" no hopes of recovering any part
" of my fortune; and the ſtock and
" the farm were totally inſufficient
" for the decent ſupport of my fa-
" mily. In this extremity I went to
" my brother, confeſſed my marriage,
" and

"and implored his aſſiſtance. Proud,
"haughty, and particularly vain of
"the dignity of his family, I touched
"him in the tendereſt point; irri-
"tated at what he called a diſgrace-
"ful alliance, it was long before I
"could perſuade him to liſten to
"me at all. At length finding that
"my wife did not know the ſituation
"of her huſband, he offered a ſmall
"annuity, on condition that I ſhould
"never divulge to her my real name,
"without his expreſs permiſſion. He
"added a ſtill harder condition; that
"I ſhould immediately go abroad,
"and continuing the aſſumed name
"of 'Murray,' ſhould enter into the
"ſervice of the Eaſt India Company,
"in which he engaged to procure

" me a commiſſion. I long heſitated,
" before I would agree to the unfeel-
" ing terms which he had exacted.
" At length neceſſity compelled me
" to comply. My helpleſs wife and
" my infant child wanted bread, and
" this was the only channel by which
" I could procure it. The annuity
" bond was ſigned by the Duke, and
" after requiring again a ſolemn pro-
" miſe, that I would not betray the
" ſecret of my birth, he obtained for
" me the appointment he had men-
" tioned, and himſelf conducted me
" to the ſhip.

" Hard was the taſk I was called
" upon to diſcharge, in breaking out
" to my fond wife our fatal ſeparation;
" condemned to ſilence, I could not
" explain

explain the true motives of my conduct, and I was compelled to appear unkind, at the moment when I was making every ſacrifice to promote her happineſs, and that of my child. I told her in general terms, that circumſtances obliged me to go abroad for ſome years, and that I even wiſhed to be thought dead, in order to prevent enquiries. I mentioned that I had left an annuity bond for £. 200. in the hands of a common friend, who would remit to her that ſum in quarterly payments; and after many affectionate wiſhes, I recommended it to her, to circulate in the neighbourhood, that I had been drowned in a voyage to Jamaica, and to aſſume the dreſs

" character of a widow. I added,
" that if I ſucceeded in what I was
" engaged in, I would immediately
" ſend for her and my daughter.
" Fourteen years hard ſervice at
" length procured me the com-
" mand of a regiment. I forgot not
" my promiſe, and after writing to
" my brother, reſigning the annuity,
" and acquainting him with my in-
" tention of calling the objects of my
" affection to ſhare my competence,
" I repeated my engagement not to
" diſcloſe my birth.

" My dear wife, and my daughter,
" whoſe early virtues reminded me of
" my firſt acquaintance with her
" mother, arrived in ſafety. Hap-
" pineſs once again viſited my long

"afflicted heart, I claſped my loved "Charlotte to my breaſt, and re- "ceived her pardon for an apparent "cruelty, of which my ſoul was in- "capable. We have paſt five years "in tranquil and innocent enjoy- "ments: I hope, before I die, that "I may be permitted to open my "whole mind to the beſt of wives, "and to reveal the only ſecret I ever "attempted to hide from her.

(ſigned)

"WILLIAM M^cLEAN,
ſon of the late, and only bro- ther of the preſent, Duke of Annan; but ſtiling myſelf at preſent,
"WILLIAM MURRAY."

To

To this was added a poſtſcript, written ſince his return to England)

"London, November 17—

"One year ſince, I received an ex-
"preſs over land, informing me of
"the death of my nephew, and my
"brother's wiſh to ſee me in England.
"I obeyed the ſummons, but only
"arrived time enough to behold him
"expire. With his laſt breath he re-
"queſted me to forgive the hard con-
"ditions he had exacted, and freed
"me from my promiſe of ſecrecy.

"I ſucceeded, of courſe, to his
"honours and eſtate; and add this
"poſtſcript in confirmation of the le-
"gitimacy of my daughter.

(ſigned) "ANNAN."

Frederic had ſcarcely finiſhed this paper, the peruſal of which filled his mind with the moſt lively ſenſations of pleaſure and ſurpriſe, when the Duke of Annan was brought into the room, ſupported on one ſide by his lovely daughter. In the hurry and agitation of the preceding night, Latimer had not time to obſerve the features of him, whoſe life he had preſerved. He now beheld a venerable man, of military aſpect, mild deportment, and ſtriking figure. His grey hair gave the appearance of reſpectability and age to his manly form; and the expreſſion of every virtue ſeemed ſtamped on his countenance. He was dreſt in a regimental great coat, the only article of his wardrobe

wardrobe which had been ſaved fro
the flames, and his legs ſwelled wit
the gout, were covered with flannel
and ſupported on pillows. He di-
rected himſelf to be placed on a ſopha
near his deliverer, and taking his
hand with affectionate freedom, "If
words," ſaid he "could expreſs my
"gratitude, I would thank you; but
"what I owe to you admits of no
"return. When you ſee a father
"reſtored to his daughter, a daughter
"to her parents, and remember that
"the work is yours, you receive the
"only reward worthy your accept-
"ance. I have juſt learnt that I
"have the happineſs of finding in
"my preſerver, a brother-ſoldier;
"one with whole family I am nearly
"connected,

"connected, and of whoſe dawning "merits I have ſo often heard from "the lips of an affectionate wife. "Such, Mr. Latimer, are your claims "to my regard; allow me to throw "aſide all ceremony, and conſidering "you as an old friend, to treat you "with the warmth which my heart "would dictate." Frederic was ſenſibly affected by the liberality, the candor, and the ingenuous manner of his new acquaintance. He returned his addreſſes with equal frankneſs, and their congenial minds ſoon formed an intimacy of which colder characters were totally incapable. Though Frederic addreſſed his language to the Duke of Annan, his eyes were fixed on a dearer object: Charlotte,

Charlotte, his long loſt Charlotte, ſtood before him, adorned with every real charm, with which his fondeſt imagination had ever decked her. He contemplated her features, and his recollection, "for Ah! how vaſt a memory has love," traced back with joy inexpreſſible, the traits which excited his youthful admiration! She was, if poſſible, more lovely than ever. Time had matured the beauty of her form, and the various ſenſations which agitated her mind at this moment, gave the moſt intereſting expreſſion to her countenance. She turned away, and endeavoured to conceal a tear of joy, which the ſight of Frederic, and the growing regard of her father for the object

object of her earlieſt affections, involuntarily drew from her. Finding it impoſſible to compoſe her agitated ſpirits, ſhe pretended to have forgotten ſome buſineſs of importance, and apologizing, with ill-diſſembled eaſe, to Latimer, retired into the adjoining room. She was no ſooner gone than the Duke of Annan, who loved her to diſtraction, began to expatiate on his favourite ſubject, the virtues of his daughter. "Oh, Sir," ſaid he, "you know not half the "good you have done. In ſaving "my child you have preſerved the "moſt amiable, the moſt innocent "of her ſex. No language can do "juſtice to her merits. Generous, "humane, candid, affectionate; ſhe

"is

'is the ſincereſt friend, the moſt
" obedient daughter. You witneſſed
" laſt night her unexampled attach-
" ment, when with filial piety car-
" ried to exceſs, ſhe would periſh
" rather than abandon her helpleſs
" father. Such, Sir, has always been
" her conduct, during the five years
" I have been bleſt with her ſociety,
" (alas, no longer have I known that
" happineſs!) Tormented with the
" complaint under which I now ſuffer,
" I have repeatedly for months to-
" gether, been a victim to its excru-
" ciating pain. Her kind attention,
" her foſtering care, her unremitting
" goodneſs, have afforded palliatives
" to my ſufferings, beyond the power
" of deſcription. Whilſt the other

" females

"females of her age were ſeeking
"the amuſements of diſſipation, to
"which the manners of the Eaſt
"are particularly prone, ſhe took
"her ſilent ſtand at the foot of my
"bed, watched my every look, en-
"livened my thoughts with her in-
"nocent prattle, and by the tender-
"neſs with which ſhe adminiſtered,
"gave freſh power to the art of me-
"dicine. Such has been her life!
"Such the obligations I owe to her
"and her admirable mother, who
"participated in the labour and ſe-
"cluſion of her daughter.

"My Charlotte has another me-
"rit, very rare in this country, and
"ſtill more ſo in India, that of
"withſtanding every temptation of

" wealth. The richeſt and moſt re-
" ſpectable men, high in power, and
" many of them as eminent in me-
" rit, ſtruck with her beauty, her vir-
" tues, and her ſimplicity, offered her
" their hand. Though our circum-
" ſtances were then far from affluent,
" ſhe diſdained to barter affection
" for money; and, to the aſtoniſh-
" ment of the whole ſettlement, re-
" jected the moſt advantageous pro-
" poſals. I did not attempt to force
" her inclinations; and after five
" years reſidence at Madras, ſhe has
" returned unmarried, having reſiſted
" every allurement of rank and for-
" tune."

The Duke of Annan knew not how joyful was the intelligence he

conveyed

conveyed to the breaſt of Frederic. Though vanity was not his foible, he could not help flattering himſelf that he had ſome concern in the rejection of the lovers whom his Grace had enumerated; and this aſſurance was the only addition of which his preſent happineſs was ſuſceptible. He wiſhed himſelf to have declared all he thought of the perfections of Charlotte, but he feared to expreſs too much or too little; he therefore contented himſelf with ſaying, "Oh "Sir! I ſee your daughter is what "ſhe always promiſed to be, the "pattern of her mother. But allow "me to aſk after my revered friend "Mrs. Murray, I beg pardon, I "believe I ſhould ſay the Ducheſs

" of Annan; but the former name
" is ſo dear to my recollection, that
" I involuntarily make uſe of it."

" That name," replied the Duke,
" is no leſs intereſting to me: it re-
" minds me of my early love; of
" many years of painful abſence, and
" ſome few of great felicity. I can
" ſcarcely perſuade myſelf to call
" my dear wife by any other. She
" left me ten days ſince for Devon-
" ſhire; for I was incapable of tra-
" velling, having been ſeized with
" my old complaint on my arrival
" in England. I need not tell you,
" that the object of her journey was
" to ſee her beloved brother, your
" worthy guardian, Mr. Darewell.
" Fearing leſt ſhe ſhould be alarmed
" by

"by the report of the fire, I have "already ſent an expreſs to Daw- "liſh, informing her of our eſcape. "I hope in a few days I ſhall ſee "both her and Mr. Darewell in "London."

"In London!" cried Frederic, "then indeed my happineſs will be "complete: to meet once again aſ- "ſembled together the dear friends "of my early youth, is a joy be- "yond my fondeſt expectation." Latimer next enquired the occa- ſion of the fire. He learnt, that the Duke on his arrival in town had hired a furniſhed houſe in Berk- ley Square, (the family manſion be- ing ſettled on the dowager) where he had reſided till the fatal accident;

which was ſuppoſed to ariſe from the careleſsneſs of a ſervant, who, in going to bed, had neglected to remove ſome linen which was hanging to dry in the laundry, and which catching fire, communicated to the reſt of the building. After many aſſurances of regard on both ſides, and a kind invitation to dinner the following day from the Duke of Annan, Frederic took his leave, having in vain expected for ſome time the return of Charlotte. In fact, ſhe found herſelf too much agitated both from the danger of the preceding night, and the ſcene ſhe had juſt witneſſed, to ſee Latimer again that day without too evidently diſcloſing the effect of his preſence.

preſence. Frederic was diſappointed; and in returning to his room, could not help accuſing her of marked indifference. "Her rank, her "change of ſituation," thought he, "have had their uſual conſequences. "She evidently avoids me; yet why "ſhould I repine? By my unfor- "tunate conduct in reſpect to Lady "Ann, I am at any rate unworthy "her affections; and her newly- "diſcovered birth renders it more "impoſſible than ever that I ſhould "call her mine: yet I wiſhed once "more to have ſpoken to her, to "have aſked her forgiveneſs, and to "have aſſured her of my unceaſing "regard. It was cruel of her not "to give me this poor ſatisfaction."

For ſome time he thus tormented his feelings, and deſtroyed the pleaſure he experienced in diſcovering her hiſtory, and in remembering that he was once more under the ſame roof with the beloved object of all his wiſhes.

Occupied ſolely with her, ſome hours elapſed before he recollected that he had not informed his mother of his arrival. He then wrote a few lines, mentioning his ſafety, and the lameneſs which confined him to the houſe.

CHAP. XXV.

FREDERIC counted the minutes with anxious expectation till dinner-time the next day, when he was again to behold his Charlotte. He took care to arrive rather before the time, in the hope of finding her alone. He was not diſappointed. Recovered from the alarm of the late accident, ſimply elegant in her dreſs, and her whole countenance animated with the thought of ſeeing Latimer, ſhe appeared more faſcinating than ever. When his name was announced, ſhe aroſe, changed colour,

colour, and was leaving the room. "I will tell my father," ſaid ſhe, as he took hold of the lock of an adjoining door, "that you are here; "I am ſure that he will wait on you "directly." "For God's ſake," cried Latimer, "do not thus avoid "me! there was a time when my "preſence was not ſo hateful." She turned back, and with evident confuſion again took her ſeat. With heſitating accents ſhe attempted an apology: "I am very ſorry—I am "ſure—I did not—could not—I "ſay—I am convinced Mr. Latimer "you will not think me capable of "rudeneſs; of want of gratitude—"

"In pity," interrupted Frederic, "drop ſo cold a word; gratitude to "me!

"me! how can ſuch a thought en-
"ter your mind; unleſs you wiſh
"to drive me mad, never mention
"it again. Think not that I pre-
"ſume on the little ſervice chance
"allowed me to afford you. No.
"If old acquaintance, if the re-
"membrance of former days; of our
"early youth; of the once-loved
"ſcenes of Devonſhire; do not en-
"title me to your attention, I have
"no other claim to offer. Have
"you entirely forgotten the happy
"hours we once paſſed together?"

Charlotte's aſſumed reſerve could no longer reſtrain the feelings of her heart. She replied, with warmth, "Indeed, indeed, I never can forget "that time."

"And

"And do you," ſaid Frederic, his voice ſoftened by the declaration which had eſcaped her, "do "you look back with ſome little "pleaſure to that delightful pe-"riod? Do you remember that "laſt — that — that fatal morning — "when — when —." He heſitated; he was too much agitated to proceed.

Charlotte, recollecting herſelf, alarmed at what ſhe had already confeſſed, and ſtill more apprehenſive of the continuance of the ſubject, took advantage of this pauſe, and again attempted to leave the room. Again Frederic ſtopped her, and thus continued: "Fear not "that I ſhall offend you by remind-

"ing

"ing you of any thing which can
"give you pain. I know too well
"the great diſtance now between
"us; you are high born, affluent. I preſume no longer to
"addreſs you as a lover. I am
"conſcious of my poverty; and
"though my happineſs is ſacrificed
"by the declaration, from this hour
"I reſign all pretenſions to your
"hand. I only aſk one favour: allow me to confeſs a load of guilt
"which harrows up my ſoul?—Do
"you recollect a certain promiſe?
"That promiſe I have broken; ſcandalouſly, perfidiouſly violated."

Charlotte, ſuffocated with her tears, could not interrupt him.

He then related, without palliating

liating his fault, his adventure with Lady Ann Routley.

Poor Charlotte was relieved by the concluſion: ſhe ſuppoſed him actually married, by his violent accuſations againſt himſelf; and was not a little gratified in finding that her lover's offence was only in theory, not in practice. Delicacy forbade any particular reply; yet ſhe could not help ſaying, "Really, Mr. Latimer, you have done no harm. "I had no right to expect — to "hope — to aſk —," ſhe pauſed, and at length added, "Indeed I "am not angry." She accompanied theſe laſt words with a ſmile ſo heavenly, that it would have reconciled the moſt criminal offender

to himſelf. Frederic was about to expreſs how unworthy he was of her forgiveneſs, when ſhe aroſe, and reminding him that her father waited for her in the other room, was at length allowed to retire. Latimer had ſcarcely time to compoſe his agitated frame, before the Duke of Annan, aſſiſted by his ever-attentive daughter, made his appearance. Frederic paſſed one of the happieſt days of his life. The Duke was all kindneſs, liberality, friendſhip. The lovely Charlotte ſaid little; but in her expreſſive eye, Frederic read neither anger nor diſpleaſure; and he even flattered himſelf that he ſeemed to occupy her attention. At a late hour he took his leave.

The

The next morning, after an anxious night, rendered ſo by the delightful hopes which Charlotte's manner, and above all the ſmile with which ſhe pronounced his pardon, had rekindled in his breaſt, he prepared to pay his reſpects to his mother; being now ſufficiently recovered from his fall to be carried in a chair to Annan Houſe. From the kind letter he had received in the Weſt Indies, he expected that his preſence would not be unacceptable. He was uſhered into a drawing-room, where he was ſurprized at finding the widowed Ducheſs not alone. Mr. Daſh, whoſe character we have before deſcribed, was ſeated near her on a ſopha. On ſeeing Frederic,

Frederic, he aroſe, expreſſed his congratulations on his return to England, and was leaving the room, when her Grace requeſted him to ſtay; adding, with great indifference, "Latimer and I have no-"thing to diſcuſs which requires "your abſence." Chilled with the coldneſs of his only parent, Frederic checked the ardor with which he approached her, and returned her embrace with as little warmth as his nature could admit of. If he was hurt at his reception, he was ſtill more ſo at the calm eaſe with which ſhe enquired the hiſtory of his adventures, and of his illneſs in the Weſt Indies: "How did you "like Martinique? Was the yel-

" low fever very terrible? Was the " war very ſhocking?" were queſtions aſked with the ſame flippant inattention with which ſhe would have chatted with ſome favourite beau on the excellence of a ſinger, the ſplendor of an opera, or the taſte of a prevalent faſhion. Latimer ſoon found that the few months which had elapſed ſince the date of her laſt letter, had made a total change in the favourable opinion which he had flattered himſelf his mother began to feel for him. After a few trifling obſervations, ſimilar to thoſe we have mentioned, ſhe addreſſed herſelf to Daſh, and ſeemed to forget that her ſon was preſent. Frederic, indignant at her conduct,

roſe,

roſe, and was taking his leave. "Be-
"fore you go," ſaid the Ducheſs,
"I muſt tell you the ſtrange meta-
"morphoſis which has taken place
"in the family of your old tutor
"Darewell. Do you know that his
"ſiſter, the woman who uſed to
"waſh your hands and comb your
"hair, that Mrs. *What do you call*
"*her*, is become no leſs a perſonage
"than Ducheſs of Annan. I can
"ſcarcely keep my countenance
"when I think of it, but I muſt
"tell you the whole ſtory." Frede-
ric found it difficult to command his
temper. The deference due to a mo-
ther could alone keep him from re-
ſenting ſo diſreſpectful a mention of
his earlieſt friend, the moſt amiable

of her ſex. Determined however to hear no more, he ſtopped the Ducheſs, who was inclined to be very eloquent on the ſubject, and entreated her to ſpare herſelf the trouble of relating the particulars. "I know every thing," ſaid he, "I "am rejoiced to find that Mrs. "Murray, the beſt, the moſt ac- "compliſhed, and the moſt unex- "ceptionable woman living, is re- "ſtored to the arms of an affec- "tionate huſband. As to her "change of name, I am convinced "ſhe has good ſenſe enough not to "ſet any value on ſo artificial an ad- "vantage, but I cannot help ſaying "there is no ſituation which ſhe "will not adorn."

"She

"She has found a very able ad-
"vocate in you, young man," anſwered the Ducheſs with a ſneer; "but I fear, however grateful you "may be for the ſugar plumbs, "cakes, and toys, which ſhe may "have given you as a boy, you will "find it difficult to reconcile the "*beau monde* to her prepoſterous "exaltation. But apropos, what "kind of creature is her daughter? "I have not yet ſeen her; I hope her "father's blood has purified the vul-"garity ſhe inherits from her mo-"ther?"

Frederic ſhocked at hearing his Charlotte ſpoken of with diſreſpect, with contempt, exclaimed, with all the natural animation of his cha-

racter, " Oh, madam! ſhe is the
" very criterion of female perfection.
" I will not attempt to deſcribe
" her—ſuffice it to ſay, that ſhe is
" exactly the reverſe of thoſe who
" are called " Women of Faſhion."
The marked accent with which he
pronounced theſe laſt words, proved
evidently that he alluded to the
Ducheſs. " I readily believe," ſaid
her Grace with an ironical tone,
" that ſhe is very different from
" every body one ever ſaw or ever
" heard of; but I really fear you are
" in love from the warmth of your
" deſcription, and I aſſure you, you
" could not do a more fooliſh thing.
" She has no money during her fa-
" ther's life; I have none to give
" you;

"you; and however your romantic "thoughts may like ſentimental ſe- "licity in a cottage, truſt me you "will ſoon be tired of the experi- "ment." She then burſt into a loud fit of laughter, in which Daſh ſeemed inclined to join her, but a look from Frederic taught him the prudence of compoſing his features.

Latimer finding it impoſſible to command his temper any longer, roſe from his ſeat, aſſured the Ducheſs that ſhe was very much miſtaken in ſuppoſing that he aſpired to any ſuch honour as to that to which ſhe alluded; and bowing reſpectfully to his Mother, and formally to Daſh, left the room.

Frederic returned to the hotel with feelings of the moſt painful nature. He had been coldly and even cruelly treated by his mother. She had inſulted the deareſt object of his affections, and had taken care to remind him of his dependant ſtate. The only poſſible chance on which he had calculated of being able to make an offer worthy the acceptance of his Charlotte, had now vaniſhed for ever. Whatever had been his mother's intentions in his favour, they had completely changed, and he ſaw ſhe was determined to offer him no aſſiſtance. Thus circumſtanced, he felt the impropriety of indulging any longer the flattering hopes which the ſight, the manner,

and

and the forgiveneſs of Charlotte, had revived. He was too generous, too noble, to ſeek what muſt now appear an intereſted union, and he thought it diſhonourable to encourage an attachment, which every principle of duty taught him the neceſſity of declining; yet it was impoſſible for him to behave with coldneſs to Charlotte. However cruel the ſacrifice, he muſt tear himſelf from her view. He now regretted that he had left the Weſt Indies, or accepted his re-appointment in the Guards; yet when he remembered that Charlotte's life, and that of her venerable Father, had been ſaved by that event, he ceaſed to lament a circumſtance in which he was the only

loſer,

loſer, and by which thoſe amiable objects had been preſerved. To exchange again into a marching regiment, and by volunteering the moſt deſperate ſervices to ſeek a glorious and ſudden termination to his cares, was the only ſad meaſure on which he could determine. He almoſt heſitated whether he ought to accept an invitation which he had received, to dine the following day with the Duke of Annan; yet he could not reſiſt the temptation of ſeeing Charlotte once again, and at the hour appointed he haſtened to the apartment of his Grace.

The little party were juſt aſſembled; the Duke, almoſt recovered from the gout, had left his ſopha,

and was ſeated for the firſt time ſince his illneſs on a chair. Lady Charlotte ſhewed, in her ſpeaking countenance, the mixed ſenſations of joy and fear which agitated her heart. She was delighted at the convaleſcence of her father, but the grief which ſhe obſerved ſtamped on the features of her lover, alarmed her gentle breaſt with a thouſand fears. Was he ill? had his fall occaſioned a fever? or had his mother, with the haughtineſs of whoſe character ſhe was well acquainted, upbraided him with his attentions to her? Both thoughts were agony. In both ſhe conſidered herſelf the cauſe of his uneaſineſs. Theſe ſentiments rendered her more particularly attentive

tentive than ſhe had ever yet ventured to be to Frederic. He on his ſide, though he tried to be reſerved, was too much elevated by her marked kindneſs to preſerve the prudent coldneſs on which he had reſolved. In her ſmiles he ſoon forgot the obſtacles to his happineſs, and thinking of nothing but his preſent joy, his face once again aſſumed its wonted gaiety. They were ſitting down to dinner, when a carriage drove up to the door of the hotel, and in a few minutes Darewell and Mrs. Murray (now Ducheſs of Annan) ruſhed into the room. The former, aſtoniſhed at finding his beloved pupil thus unexpectedly with his family, expreſſed with his

uſual

uſual warmth his pleaſure and his ſurprize; the latter was for ſome time too much occupied with the joy of beholding her huſband and her child, who had been ſo nearly ſnatched from her for ever, to ſee or think of any one elſe. She ran from one to the other, and embracing them with the fondeſt tenderneſs, could ſcarcely ſatisfy herſelf that they were really unhurt. When ſhe was at length in ſome degree tranquillized, the Duke reminded her that there was another perſon in company, whom, no doubt, ſhe would have equal ſatisfaction in diſcovering. "Permit me," continued he, "to introduce to you, in the

"cha-

"character of our preſerver, your "old friend Frederic Latimer."

The Ducheſs could ſcarcely believe that what ſhe heard was real. She looked with anxious recollection at the features of Frederic, and ſoon perceived that ſhe was not miſtaken. She flew into his arms, and overcome by the various feelings of the moment, could only ſay "Is it really to you I owe my child, "my huſband?" and inſtantly fainted. When ſhe came to herſelf, no words can deſcribe her happineſs. She was ſurrounded by all that ſhe loved on earth, and ſhe ſaw before her and recognized as the author of that happineſs, the youth whom ſhe had educated, whom ſhe had ever

conſi-

conſidered as her ſon, who had ſo long been abſent from her, and of whoſe perilous ſituation in the Weſt Indies, ſhe had heard with trembling apprehenſion. It will be needleſs to attempt a delineation of the ſcene which followed. The feeling heart will eaſily ſupply it; the cold one can not conceive, what it never can experience.

The next morning Darewell called on Frederic; and after repeating his gratitude, and that of all his family, told him he came to diſcharge a commiſſion of ſome delicacy from the Duke his brother. "You know, "Latimer," ſaid the good man, "that on the marriage of your mo- "ther with her ſecond huſband, half

"your

"your late grandfather's fortune was "paid down as a marriage portion "to the Duke of Annan. The "greater part of that ſum has de- "volved by his death on his repre- "ſentative, our venerable friend; "and he feels it a duty, which he "is not eaſy till he has fulfilled, "to pay it over to you, the proper "heir of the perſon from whom it "came." Frederic interrupted his guardian: "Good God, Sir," cried he, "what claim can I poſſibly have "on a ſum paid at my mother's "marriage with the late Duke, and "for which ample ſettlements were "made, ſecured on the eſtates now "belonging to his brother. "Be "patient," ſaid Mr. Darewell, "and "I will

"I will fully explain myſelf. The "Duke of Annan thinks, and in "my opinion thinks rightly, that "Mr. Alderman Browning's fortune "ought to have been ſecured to your "father, though, by his miſtaken "liberality, it was left in the power "of your mother. If ſhe had not "married again, you probably would "have been heir to all your grand-"father's riches. By the hard and "iniquitous bargain made by the "late Duke, half was paid down to "him as the portion of your mother, "and the remainder ſettled on the "Ducheſs for her own uſe at the "death of her father; in conſe-"quence of which the jointure iſſu-"ing out of the eſtates of Annan

" was infinitely ſmaller than it other-
" wiſe would have been; and of
" courſe my brother, who inherits
" thoſe eſtates, is ſo much the richer.
" He therefore conſiders himſelf in-
" debted to you exactly in the ſum
" he has received, and inſiſts on your
" receiving it back, not as a fa-
" vour, but as that to which you
" are ſtrictly entitled."

Frederic, ſurprized at the generous offer of the Duke, and ſtill more ſo at the urgency with which Mr. Darewell entreated him to accept it, was, however, not unprepared to act as became his character. He poſitively declined all idea of acceding to his Grace's propoſal; and with a reſolute tone aſſured his beloved

loved guardian that every argument was in vain. Mr. Darewell ſtill attempted to perſevere; he reminded him that what the Duke now offered he was fully entitled to receive; and that far from ſubjecting himſelf to an obligation, he would confer one by the acceptance. "I entreat "you, Frederic," added he, with his uſual friendſhip, "to throw "aſide ſo abſurd, ſo romantic an "exceſs of pride. You are offered "an affluent fortune, to which you "have an equitable, if not a legal "claim; and the perſon who re-"queſts you to receive it is one "who owes not only his own life to "your exertions, but likewiſe that "of his child. Remember too, that

" you loſe the only opportunity
" which may ever be afforded you
" of obtaining a comfortable, inde-
" pendent ſituation. I am ſorry to
" tell you, that in the ſhort time I
" have paſſed in London, I have al-
" ready learnt, that your mother has
" formed another attachment, and
" is about to throw herſelf away on
" that worthleſs fellow Daſh; whoſe
" fine figure, inſinuating manner,
" and conſummate art, ſhe has not
" been able to withſtand. You have
" therefore no chance from that
" quarter; and I fear, if you reject
" the preſent propoſition, your cir-
" cumſtances can never be im-
" proved." " Oh talk not thus to
" me, my dear Sir," replied Fre-

deric,

deric, "you know on principles I "am not to be ſhaken by pecuniary "reaſons. I am ſure you do not "think I ſhould do wrong in agree- "ing to the Duke's munificent of- "fer, or you would not recommend "it; but on this ſubject I muſt be "guided by my own judgment. It "is a queſtion of feeling; and you "muſt forgive me when I aſſure you, "that no perſon on earth can ſhake "my reſolution in refuſing a pro- "poſal, the generoſity of which I "never ſhall forget. The accept- "ance, in my mind, would have "been alike derogatory to my cha- "racter, unhandſome to the Duke, "and unjuſt to his daughter."

"Well, Frederic," rejoined Mr.

Darewell, " your laſt remark has " ſuggeſted a mode of ſettling our " little difference, which I hope will " not be diſagreeable: you once " profeſſed an attachment to my " niece. She remains unmarried, " and ſeems not to diſlike you. If " Lady Ann Routley has not entirely " driven her from your thoughts, " perhaps you may ſtill be inclined " to offer her your hand. I think I " could engage for my ſiſter and her " worthy huſband that they will not " oppoſe your ſucceſs. God knows, " when Mrs. Murray and I tore you " from each other at Dawliſh, our " only motive was your mutual hap- " pineſs. You had then not the " means of exiſtence. A large ſum

"is now offered you, which, though "you may reject alone, you cer- "tainly will not refuſe as the for- "tune of Charlotte."

Frederic was confuſed; he knew not what to anſwer; at length, recovering the uſe of ſpeech, he aſſured Mr. Darewell, that though he felt the moſt ardent affection for his niece; and that he ſhould make himſelf the moſt miſerable man alive in ſeparating himſelf from the firſt, the only object of his laſting attachment, yet he was determined to do ſo. "The very reaſon," added he, "my dear Sir, which you urge "for my encouraging this early "paſſion of my heart, is the one "which determines me to relin-

" quiſh it for ever. If Lady Char-
" lotte Maclean were ſtill the ſimple
" Miſs Murray, with nothing but
" her virtues for her dower, and I
" the emperor of the world, I ſhould
" think myſelf honoured in being
" allowed to declare myſelf her lover:
" but far different is our preſent ſitu-
" ation; ſhe is now the affluent
" daughter of a noble Duke; ſhe
" is entitled to expect the higheſt
" rank and riches in the country.
" Does it become me, a poor ſu-
" baltern in the army, with ſcarcely
" any thing but my pay, an outcaſt
" from my family, to aſpire at calling
" her mine? No, Sir, I will not at-
" tempt to cloud the bright proſpect
" which ſhines before her. I will not
" purchaſe

"purchaſe the happineſs, the inex-
"preſſible happineſs, of being the
"huſband of Charlotte, at the price
"of diſhonour. My reſolution is
"taken. I will again exchange into
"the line; and flying once more to
"the deſolating ſcenes of the Weſt
"Indies, end my miſerable days, if
"not in tranquillity, at leaſt with
"reputation."

Darewell, whilſt he admired the magnanimity of his adopted ſon, tried every argument to diſſuade him from ſo raſh a reſolution, and to induce him to conſider, at leaſt, the hint he had thrown out. "You "are," ſaid Darewell, "the moſt "extraordinary young man alive. "When it was madneſs to think of "marrying

" marrying my niece, force only pre-
" vented your doing ſo. Now, when
" every circumſtance ſeems to ren-
" der ſuch an union deſirable, it is
" impoſſible to make you even liſten
" to the propoſal." But neither rail-lery nor argument had any weight with Frederic, and Mr. Darewell left his beloved pupil without having made any impreſſion on his mind. Though he ſincerely regretted his miſtaken generoſity, he could not help in his heart commending the noble, the diſintereſted principle on which he acted.

CHAP. XXVI.

WHEN Mr. Darewell repeated the converſation which had paſſed between him and Frederic, the Duke and Ducheſs of Annan were equally grieved and ſurprized at the ſelf-forbearance of Latimer. They all agreed in ardently wiſhing to overcome his amiable ſcruples, and to ſee Charlotte united to a man who by this very act proved himſelf ſo truly worthy of her choice. They concealed from her their deſign, but they determined, by all poſſible means, to encourage an union every way calculated to promote the happineſs

pineſs of the two beings in whoſe fate they felt moſt deeply intereſted.

Frederic, in the mean while, feeling the ſad neceſſity of tearing himſelf from the ſight of her he adored, had declined two or three preſſing invitations from the Duke of Annan, and had actually entered into a negotiation for exchanging into a regiment quartered in St. Domingo, when he received another meſſage begging him to dine with his friends the next day, previouſly to their removal from the hotel, which was to take place the ſubſequent morning; his Grace having hired a houſe in the neighbourhood, to which he was now ſufficiently recovered to be conveyed.

Frederic

Frederic doubted whether he ought to accept this invitation; yet, as he was determined to compleat the exchange, and to ſet ſail in a ſhort time for a diſtant country, he thought he might venture once again to indulge himſelf with the ſight of Charlotte.

He was received by the Duke and Ducheſs with the ſame cordial warmth as uſual, but he could not help being hurt at the cold and diſtant manner of their daughter. In fact ſhe conceived herſelf neglected by his abſence, and unacquainted with his honourable motives, attributed his conduct to change of opinion, to fickleneſs of character, or ſome new attachment. Her warm heart

heart had been agonized with theſe thoughts for ſome days, and her feelings were marked on her countenance. She returned his enquiries after her health with evident formality, but Frederic diſtracted at the appearance of illneſs, which he perceived in her altered looks, enquired again with ſo much intereſt, that ſhe ſoon forgot her anger, found excuſes for his behaviour, and again welcomed him to himſelf by her ſmiles. The dinner paſt as it ever did in their ſociety, with conviviality and good humour. They were ſitting round the fire in the evening, the Ducheſs preſiding at the tea table, Charlotte playing the harp, on which ſhe was a proficient, Frederic

ric liſtening with fond admiration,
: Duke reading a news-paper
ich had juſt been brought in, and
arewell contemplating with inward
, the happy little circle which he
held around him, when the noiſe
a piſtol-ſhot ſuddenly alarmed
em. The bell was rung, and a
iter, after ſome delay, ran into the
om in great apparent agitation.—
For Heaven's ſake," ſaid Mr.
arewell, "what is the matter?
Whence came that report?" "Oh
Sir," replied the man, trembling as
: ſpoke "the poor young gentle-
man who came here laſt night"—
rederic ſuſpected from this begin-
ng that he was about to relate
mething horrid, and fearful leſt
his

his Charlotte ſhould be affected by the recital, ſprang from his ſeat, and forcing the waiter out of the door, prevented the concluſion of his ſpeech. He then enquired again, and was again informed "that the "poor young gentlemen who came "in laſt night, had juſt left himſelf, "in the adjoining room." Darnell [illegible] Frederic, and they [illegible] the apartment [illegible]

[illegible]

act, and another charged and primed ſeemed ready to have perfected his deſign, if he had failed in the firſt attempt. They were too much agitated at the ſight to know for ſome time what ought to be done. It at laſt occurred to Mr. Darewell, that ſome letter might be found in the pocket of the unfortunate young man which might diſcloſe who he was; for the waiters were unacquainted with his name, and had never ſeen him before the preceding night, when he arrived in a chaiſe from the country.

Darewell firſt looked in the pocket of his waiſtcoat, and there perceived a ſlip of paper on which was written—

" A fatal paſſion for play
" my ruin; I loſt ten
" pounds to Mr. Daſh.
" down to Yorkſhire; n
" would not diſcharge my d
" turned; tried in vain t
" the money in London; i
" to be had. My honou
" ed for the payment t
" Driven to deſpair, I ha
" mined to end my days
" Whoever you are who
" paper, cenſure not my
" unleſs you have know
" like mine. Oh! my fat
" you hear of my death,
" perhaps regret when to
" unfortunate

" AGINC

Mr. Darewell read the ſignature three times before he would allow himſelf to believe that indeed it was that of Lord Agincourt, Frederic's couſin, the only remaining ſon of his former pupil the Earl of Creſſey. He flattered himſelf at firſt that he was miſtaken, but on examining his other pockets he was fatally convinced of the truth. Amongſt other papers he found a letter to him from Daſh, of which the following is a copy.

" My dear Lord,"

" I am ſorry to appear trou-
" bleſome, or to put you to any diſ-
" treſs; but I am ſo circumſtanced
" that I cannot poſſibly diſpenſe with
" the payment of the £ 10,000. due

" to me from you beyond Tuefday
" next. To account for my being
" ſo preſſing, I will not conceal from
" you that I am about to be mar-
" ried to the beautiful Ducheſs of
" Annan; and that the ſum in queſ-
" tion is wanted for the neceſſary
" preparations.

" Having ſaid this, and having
" added that the match muſt be put
" off, if I am diſappointed in receiving
" the money, I ſhall depend on your
" punctuality.

" Your's very truly
(ſigned) " H. DASH."

Addreſſed to
"Lord Agincourt."

This letter ſeemed to have occaſioned the promiſe, the non-performance

rmance of which had induced this
ſh young nobleman to put an end
his exiſtence. Darewell took care to
:ure theſe papers, and having long
en connected with the family of
e deceaſed, he felt it his duty, how-
er painful, to communicate the ſad
:elligence to Lord Creſſey. Fre-
ric knew but little of his couſin,
ıo had been principally educated
Yorkſhire, had then paſt ſome
ars abroad, and was but lately re-
rned to England, during the ab-
ıſe of the former in the Weſt In-
ɛs; yet was he deeply afflicted with
ı untimely fate. He recollected
ı own ſenſations at the loſs of a
mparatively ſmall ſum of money,
d whilſt he felt the moſt lively grati-

tude to Mr. Denniſon, who had on that occaſion taught him the duties of fortitude, he pitied more than blamed his unfortunate relation. The advantages he was perſonally to derive from this dreadful accident, his generous heart never allowed him to conſider; and he lamented with ſincere grief, an event which made him heir to an Engliſh earldom and fifteen thouſand a year. When he was ſufficiently recovered to ſtifle the appearance of ſorrow, he returned to the apartment of the Duke, and ſatisfied the anxious apprehenſions of Charlotte, by pretending that a piſtol had gone off by accident, and that the waiters had in their alarm, ſuppoſed a gentleman had been ſhot. But

though

though he thus diſſembled the truth for a few moments, his candid mind was incapable of carrying on the deceit, and pretending a particular engagement, he took his leave. He went immediately to Mr. Darewell, whom he found occupied in the melancholy taſk of communicating the fatal intelligence to Lord Creſſey. "My only conſolation," ſaid Darewell, as he entered the room, "at this "ſad event, is, that you will ſucceed "to the fortune and honours of your "family. I congratulate you, my dear "Frederic, and ſincerely hope you "will long live to enjoy them."

"Oh, Sir," replied the warm-hearted Latimer, "do not ſpeak to "me of joy, of fortune, or of honours,

" at this moment; when I remember
" my own folly, I can not be ſuffici-
" ently thankful at not having my-
" ſelf committed a ſimilar crime;
" to your early inſtructions, and to
" the kind attentions of the worthy
" Mr. Denniſon, do I alone owe my
" preſervation."

" You will derive," continued Mr. Darewell " another poſſible advantage
" from this melancholy cataſtrophe.
" The letter we have juſt read, paints
" the character of Daſh in ſuch co-
" lours, that I am determined to ſend
" it to your mother. It may perhaps
" awaken her prudence, and prevent
" the execution of the wild ſcheme
" ſhe now meditates, of marrying
" this diſſipated, this abandoned

" young

"young man. Should it do ſo, it "is poſſible ſhe may once again feel "for you the affection of a parent, "and allow you to ſhare ſome part "of her enormous wealth."

Frederic again entreated his guardian not to think of him, but to devote his whole mind to the letters he was compelled to write; framing them in language beſt calculated to prepare the unfortunate Lord Creſſey for the ſudden and fatal account of his ſon's diſſolution.

By the exertions of Darewell and Frederic, the jury who were now ſummoned, returned a verdict of lunacy; and the remains of the once elegant Lord Agincourt were allowed the rites of burial.

In

In a few days the expreſs returned with Lord Creſſey's anſwer. Humbled by this heavy calamity, that haughty earl no longer expreſſed himſelf with arrogance. To the tutor whom in his infancy he had preſumed to treat with diſreſpect, and whom afterwards he had totally forgotten, he now wrote in terms of affectionate gratitude; after declaring all the agony of his preſent feelings, and his extreme ill health, he thanked Mr. Darewell for the delicate manner in which he had conveyed the fatal news, and ſtill more ſo, for the very favourable account he had tranſmitted to him of his nephew, the laſt and ſole remaining hope of his family, whoſe ſafe return to England was the only

conſolation

conſolation of which his calamities admitted. The letter concluded with a preſſing invitation to Darewell and Frederic to pay him a viſit in Yorkſhire, and by their preſence to alleviate the gloom and horror of his thoughts.

It was very inconvenient to Darewell to take ſo long a journey, for though in good health, he was now more than ſeventy years of age, beſides which he felt ſo happy in the ſociety of his dear ſiſter, of her eſtimable huſband, and his lovely niece, that he wiſhed to employ the ſhort time he allowed himſelf to be abſent from his pariſh, ſolely in their company. To Latimer alſo, the journey was far from pleaſant. His whole thoughts

thoughts were wrapped up in Charlotte, and being now in a ſituation which entitled him to look forward to the completion of his wiſhes, without diſgrace to her or diſhonour to himſelf, he every day became more attached; whilſt ſhe on her part, though unconſcious of this change in his affairs, was delighted at the ſerenity of his manner, and no longer doubted the warmth or the truth of his attachment. Thus circumſtanced, to neither was the invitation very acceptable, yet it was a duty of charity which they were called on to perform, and they felt themſelves bound to diſcharge it.

They accordingly ſet out the following morning, and in three days found

found themſelves at Poictier's Caſtle, the magnificent ſeat of the Earl of Creſſey. Frederic and Mr. Darewell were received by the chaplain of the family with great civility and reſpect: from him they learnt that Lord Creſſey expected their arrival with impatience, but that the phyſicians who attended him, feared that for ſome days it would be imprudent to allow him that ſatisfaction, as his nerves were ſo much ſhaken, that any freſh ſurpriſe or violent agitation, might prove fatal to his conſtitution, which had long been the victim of debility and diſeaſe. In this interval, Darewell related to Frederic, who knew little of his uncle, the hiſtory of his life. After paſſing a ſhort time at

Eton,

Eton, to which ſchool it will be remembered he was ſent by the advice of Mr. Darewell, and making but little improvement either in mind or knowledge, he was, on the death of his father, taken home by his doting mother, and for three years kept in effeminate eaſe, driving her phaeton in the morning, and attending her to routs in the evening. He then thought fit to travel, and followed by a ſervile and obedient tutor, viſited the different courts of Europe. He was delighted with Italy. The pleaſures and the air of that ſoft climate, were particularly calculated for his delicate frame; and on coming of age, he merely viſited England for a few weeks, took his ſeat in the

houſe of lords, and then returned to Florence; where his large fortune procured him the rank, the luxuries, and the reſpect of a reigning prince. Twenty years he paſt in this manner, indulged in every caprice of paſſion, flattered, courted, and almoſt worſhipped by the needy Italians. During his ſtay in that country, he became acquainted with an Engliſh lady, the daughter of an officer then on his travels, of extreme beauty and great accompliſhments. He tried at firſt to ſeduce her, but finding that impoſſible, and being called to an account by the veteran her father, for the attempt, he condeſcended to accomodate the buſineſs by marrying her. By Lady Creſſey he had three children,

children, two ſons and a daughter; the latter died in her infancy, the younger ſon was in the navy, and killed in a late engagement; the eldeſt and only remaining child was he, whoſe melancholy fate has been before related. Satiated with pleaſure, he was at laſt perſuaded by the Counteſs, who was impatient to diſplay her rank and fortune amongſt her humble relations at home, to return to England, and in the novelty of the ſcene, he hoped to find freſh ſources of enjoyment. He ſettled firſt in London, but that ſeat of independance was little ſuited to his haughty diſpoſition. Uſed to command, to be ſurrounded by flatterers and dependants, to be ſtared at, followed,

lowed, talked of; he was diſguſted with the familiarity of manner with which he was accoſted, was aſtoniſhed at the tranquillity with which he was allowed to drive through the ſtreets of the Metropolis, and was irritated at the inſolence of the people, whoſe carriages often unadorned by coronets did not give place to his. His pride could not endure a city which ſubjected him to ſuch indignities. He would have returned to Italy, but the report of war alarmed his timid mind, and he took the reſolution, though deteſting the country, of retiring to his family ſeat in Yorkſhire. There in dignified ſolitude he had paſt ſeven long years with ſcarcely any ſociety, no amuſement, and with

evident injury to his health, long accuſtomed to a milder climate. To conſole him for theſe loſſes, he was the richeſt man within twenty miles, and the only peer in that neighbourhood, the greateſt part of which belonged to himſelf. When he took the air in his coach and ſix, the villagers flew to the door of their cottages, ſtared with aſtoniſhment, and bowed at humble diſtance. The country ſquires attended his levee days with regularity, and gratified his ruling paſſion by the charming intermixture of "*my Lord*," and your "*Lordſhip*," in every ſentence. In ſhort, here though he was not entertained he was yet a great man, and for that he was ready to make every ſacrifice.

ſacrifice. During his reſidence at *Poictiers* he loſt both his mother and his wife; of courſe the dulneſs of his life had encreaſed. He did not deign to viſit any of the neighbourhood on the terms of intimate familiarity. His whole time was ſpent in the company of a few wretched dependants. A domeſtic chaplain, a phyſician alſo attached to the family, for he was a conſtant invalid, and two or three clergymen of adjoining pariſhes, who paid the price of their admiſſion to his ſplendid table by the moſt ſervile adulation; theſe formed the whole of his ſociety. His conſtitution weakened by the effeminate enjoyments of his former life, and incapable of ſuſtaining the continued keenneſs

of a Northern climate, w
day declining, when the fata
arrived. In Lord Agincou
hopes were centered. Pr
ambitious, he flattered hin
his ſon, whom he had ed
home, and had afterwards ſe
to his favourite Italy, would
diſtinguiſhed figure as a
character, and render ſtill m
trious the honours of h
Lord Agincourt had fine
a prepoſſeſſing figure, and
manners. His heart was
but he had been ſo long
in every early gratification
could not endure the leaſt d
to his wiſhes. His paſſi
ardent. Every thing whic

dertook he carried to extremes. Abroad he firſt contracted the habit of play; but though he loſt, he loſt not ſums of ſufficient importance to excite his uneaſineſs, or to diſguſt him with the purſuit. On his return to England he played again. In London he found ample opportunities of indulging this fatal inclination; and as uſual he put no reſtraint on his wiſhes. For ſome time fortune was uncertain; but at laſt forming an acquaintance with Mr. Daſh, who purpoſely threw himſelf in his way, he was raſh enough to enter the liſts with that experienced character. The reſult we have already ſtated.

Having learnt every particular of Lord Creſſey's ſtory, Frederic was

prepared for his uncle. On the fourth day after their arrival, Darewell and Latimer were informed by the phyſician that his lordſhip deſired to ſee them. They were ſhewn into his apartment, which was furniſhed with all the elegance of foreign magnificence. Lord Creſſey was ſtill in bed. A little emaciated figure roſe on their names being announced, and ſupported on his pillows, looked with anxious expectation on the countenances of his viſitors. Though the Earl was ſcarcely fifty years old, he had already the appearance of a very advanced period of life. With a low voice, weakened by illneſs, and humbled by diſtreſs, he feintly articulated; "Mr. Darewell, it is a long

"time

"time ſince I ſaw you; I thank you "for your undertaking this journey; "and you my nephew, the laſt, the "only remaining hope of an illuſ-"trious houſe." He ſobbed aloud, and at laſt added, "Come here, let "me behold you!"

He ordered the curtains to be undrawn, and gazed with apparent pleaſure on the manly features of Frederic. "Heavens," ſaid he, what a reſemblance! the name of Latimer is ſtamped on your countenance! "how "like my brother, how like my dear, "unfortunate, never to be ſufficiently "lamented ſon."

He was ſo much agitated that Darewell and Frederic thought it prudent to retire. In leſs than an hour

they were again ſent for; and Lord Creſſey examined a ſecond time the features of his nephew, and made a thouſand enquiries about his life, his education, his profeſſion, and his adventures. From this time he was not eaſy when ſeparated from Latimer. The latter became inceſſant in his attentions, watched his illneſs, adminiſtered his medicines, and endeavoured to diſſipate his thoughts. Though anxious to return to his beloved Charlotte, he found it impoſſible to leave the houſe of mourning, the bed of ſickneſs. Thus circumſtanced, he entreated Mr. Darewell to go back without him, and to make his excuſes to his amiable relations; but his guardian refuſed to leave him

him in ſo melancholy a ſituation, and inſiſted on ſharing the painful, the ſacred taſk he had undertaken.

A month paſt ſlowly on in this wretched ſtate; the Earl every day became worſe, and every day grew fonder of life and fonder of Frederic; but his conſtitution always weak, and long debilitated, had received a ſhock, from which it could not recover; and after executing a will, which he had directed to be drawn, leaving the whole of his fortunes to his nephew, he died in his arms with little pain, and to all appearance inſenſible of his diſſolution.

Though Latimer knew little of his Uncle, the ſituation in which he found him, and the duties he had rendered

him during his illneſs, created ſentiments of affection and pity; and his death was witneſſed with the ſincereſt regret.

Frederic, now Earl of Creſſey, and maſter of an ample fortune, was more than ever anxious to return to London, and to reap the only advantage he wiſhed to derive from this ſudden change in his affairs, by proving his diſintereſted attachment to Charlotte; yet neither he nor Mr. Darewell left Yorkſhire till they had paid every proper reſpect to the memory of the deceaſed Lord.

The funeral was performed with all the pomp and grandeur with which the late Earl had lived; and the generous heart of his ſucceſſor added

added a munificent donation to the poor of the adjoining parishes. After performing these last, these solemn duties, Darewell and his pupil returned at length to London. Frederic, though exalted in rank, and elevated in fortune, was unchanged in character. The same simple, unaffected manners, and the same respectful obedience to his former guardian, marked his conduct. The latter saw with delight that Latimer had not forgotten his early instructions, and that prosperity, more dangerous even than adversity, had not taken from his humility, or diminished the lustre of his virtues.

When Frederic and Mr. Darewell reached London, they drove immediately

diately to the Duke of Annan's, where it is needleſs to ſay they were anxiouſly expected. The Duke had heard with the ſincereſt joy of the good fortune of his generous deliverer; and the Ducheſs was no leſs delighted with the intelligence. As to Charlotte, ſhe loved Frederic ſo ardently, for himſelf alone, that though happy at an event which muſt give him perſonal ſatisfaction, yet on her own account ſhe almoſt regretted the alteration which had taken place in his circumſtances, ſince it deprived her of the opportunity of ſhewing the extent of her affection. She ſometimes feared that ſo great an elevation might change his character, and render him ſo devoted

voted to pleaſure, that he would forget the object of his early attachment, and no longer devote himſelf to her alone, Her apprehenſions were ſoon removed; on his arrival he only bowed to the Duke and Ducheſs; and flying to Lady Charlotte, ſpoke to her with more marked tenderneſs than he ever yet had ventured to ſhew; and ſeemed ſo totally occupied with the happineſs of ſeeing her, that he forgot any other human being was preſent. He was recalled to himſelf by the Ducheſs, who with the kindeſt accent, exclaimed, "Upon "my word, Frederic, I beg pardon, "I mean my Lord Creſſey, you "are already grown ſo great a man, "that you have entirely forgotten

"your

" your old friends. You have been
" five minutes in the room, without
" ſaying a ſingle word either to the
" Duke or me." Frederic ſmiled,
and pointing to Charlotte, " you
" ſee, Madam," ſaid he, " my beſt,
" my only excuſe, pray forgive me;
" I was really ſo delighted at ſeeing
" Charlotte, that—that—" he heſi-
tated.

" Oh, pray no apologies," replied
the Ducheſs, " I admit your plea.
" I am never ſo happy as when I
" find myſelf rivalled by my daugh-
" ter."

Charlotte bluſhed, and took the
opportunity, whilſt Frederic was
ſpeaking to her mother, to wipe
away a tear of joy which ſtole invo-
luntarily

luntarily down her cheek. The evening paſt with the uſual harmony which attended this happy little circle.

CHAP. XXVII.

IN a few days Lord Creſſey took an opportunity, which was readily afforded him, of declaring his attachment to Lady Charlotte. Free from affectation, candid, ingenuous, ſhe did not attempt to conceal, with miſtaken delicacy, the partiality ſhe had always felt for him; and if ſhe did not actually conſent to his preſſing offer, the ſmile with which ſhe referred him to her father pronounced his ſucceſs.

The enraptured Frederic flew to the Duke of Annan; and after declaring the long, the ardent affection he

he entertained for his daughter, gave him the rental of the eſtates to which he had ſucceeded, and deſired him to name the whole, if he thought fit, for the jointure of Charlotte.

The Duke of Annan, delighted at an event which he had anxiouſly deſired ſince his firſt acquaintance with Frederic, aſſured him, that he accepted his generous propoſals with the moſt heartfelt pleaſure; and that in giving him his daughter, he at once paid a debt of gratitude, and ſaw her happineſs ſecured. "But "Frederic," continued he, "there "is one condition which I muſt an- "nex to my conſent." "Oh name "it quickly," cried the impatient Lord Creſſey, "what is there I

" will not do to deſerve the felicity
" of being your ſon-in-law?"

" Simply," rejoined his Grace, " that you will no longer refuſe to " accept your own; I mean, the " moiety of your grandfather's for- " tune, which fell very improperly " to me at my brother's death."

" Oh talk not to me of money," ſaid Frederic, " I have already more " than I can poſſibly ſpend; nor " will I conſent to deprive you of " the ſum in queſtion, which I re- " jected in my poverty, and of which " I have now no want whatever." The Duke preſſed this point, but Latimer could not be moved. It was at length agreed, at the ſuggeſtion of Frederic, after an amiable controverſy

controverſy between theſe diſintereſted parties, that this money ſhould be laid out in the purchaſe of an eſtate which now happened to be on ſale in the vicinity of the much-loved and dearly-remembered Dawliſh, to be enjoyed by the Duke and Duchefs during their life, and then to deſcend to their daughter and Lord Creſſey. "There," ſaid Frederic, "we will paſs with you, in the "happy ſcenes of our early youth, "and our firſt attachment, thoſe "ſummers which you will not ſpend "with me in Yorkſhire. I know "Charlotte too well to wiſh to de-"prive you of her company."

"Amiable young man," exclaimed the Duke of Annan, as he ſhook

his hand with cordial warmth, "you
"have forerun my wiſhes. You
"have compleated my happineſs by
"removing the only alloy which mix-
"ed itſelf with the ſatisfaction I ex-
"perienced in giving you my daugh-
"ter. I muſt confeſs I was ſelfiſh
"enough to look forward to the mo-
"ment of parting with Charlotte with
"no little pain. I readily accept your
"kind and conſiderate propoſition.
"Our ſummers ſhall be paſſed alter-
"nately in Yorkſhire and Devon-
"ſhire; and in winter I ſuppoſe
"both the Ducheſs and Charlotte
"will wiſh to be in London, where
"our parliamentary duties will call
"you and me. There I hope Mr.
"Darewell will alſo promiſe to ſpend
"three

"three months every year in your "family or mine." As he ſpoke that venerable man came into the room, and readily agreed to the plan of happineſs which had been traced out for him. He heard with no little joy that Frederic had declared himſelf, and that he ſhould at laſt ſee the objects he loved moſt on earth united by one tender tie.

If any thing could encreaſe Charlotte's partiality to Frederic, it was this kind and affectionate attention to her feelings. To have been parted from her venerable, her ineſtimable parents, would have been indeed to her the moſt painful of all ſacrifices. By the arrangement now propoſed her happineſs was compleat; ſhe

would become the wife of the man whom ſhe adored, without loſing the ſociety of the beſt of fathers, the moſt indulgent of mothers.

As to the Ducheſs, no words can deſcribe the joy ſhe felt at this long-wiſhed-for event; and the plan of life ſuggeſted by Frederic encreaſed that joy to the higheſt pitch.

Every preparation was made with ſumptuous magnificence; for though Frederic deſpiſed ſhew and oſtentation himſelf, he was anxious, ſince he could do ſo without imprudence, to ſhew to all the world the high value he ſet on the virtues of his bride. The moſt elegant equipages, the fineſt jewels, and a houſe furniſhed with equal taſte and ſplendor, were

ordered for her uſe. Lord Creſſey likewiſe inſiſted on making as a ſettlement on Lady Charlotte ſo very large a proviſion, that the Duke of Annan long objected to it as unreaſonable. When the deeds were brought for execution, his Grace was much ſurprized at finding, that the original ſum, which he had thought exceſſive, was doubled. He imagined it was a miſtake of the conveyancer, and deſired him to correct it. He was informed, that the alteration had been made by his Lordſhip's expreſs direction. "Deny me not," cried the generous Frederic, "the ſatisfaction I "have given myſelf in thus proving "to Charlotte the extent of my at-

" tachment; money is of little uſe " but as it affords us the means " of promoting the happineſs of " others."

This noble ſentiment he followed up in all his other concerns. The elder Mr. Deering had paid him the remainder of his debt, and with tears of gratitude repeated his thanks and expreſſed his congratulations. Frederic knew that his ſon, his much-loved Edward, had long been attached to an amiable young girl of good family and ſmall fortune; and that their union had hitherto been prevented by the mediocrity of their circumſtances. He determined to employ the money he had juſt received from his venerable parent in promoting

promoting his happineſs. Edward, always intended for the church, had lately taken orders; it occurred, therefore, to Lord Creſſey, that the moſt acceptable mode of enabling him to marry the woman he loved, would be to procure him eccleſiaſtical preferment. Having no benefice vacant in his own gift, and anxious that he ſhould be ſettled in the neighbourhood of one of his reſidences, he wrote into Devonſhire and Yorkſhire, giving orders, that if the preſentation to a living in the vicinity of either could be obtained, it ſhould be purchaſed at any price. His ſteward informed him, that a rectory, within five miles of Poictiers Caſtle was to be diſpoſed of; but as its annual

annual value was conſiderable, five thouſand pounds were aſked by the patron for the preſentation. Frederic did not heſitate; and, incloſing a draft for the money, directed that his friend ſhould be immediately named.

When he had obtained his appointment with all the requiſite forms, and not till then, he informed Edward Deering, and congratulated him on his preferment.

The feelings of the two friends it will be needleſs to deſcribe; ſuffice it to ſay, that one had not more pleaſure in receiving, than the other in beſtowing this generous teſtimony of grateful affection. It was ſettled, that the ſame day which gave Char-

lotte

lotte to Lord Creſſey, ſhould unite the amiable Edward to his affianced bride; and in both caſes Mr. Darewell claimed the privilege of performing the ceremony.

The Ducheſs dowager of Annan, whoſe reigning paſſion was vanity, ſaw the elevation of her ſon with as much pleaſure as ſhe was capable of experiencing from any event in which ſhe was not perſonally and immediately concerned. As Charlotte was become the daughter of a Duke, and Frederic no longer required any aſſiſtance from her towards the completion of his happineſs, ſhe ſanctioned with her approbation a marriage, to which, if the former had continued the ſimple

Miſs

Miſs Murray, or the latter a dependant on her bounty, ſhe would have objected with her uſual violence. It was indeed ſtill a ſubject of mortification to her to be the mother of a married man, which ſhe knew would give her the appearance of being old; but as this was a circumſtance beyond her power, ſhe thought it beſt to appear delighted at an event which in her heart ſhe ſincerely regretted. As to herſelf, convinced, againſt her will, by the letter which Mr. Darewell did not fail to ſend her, of the character and real ſituation of Mr. Daſh, ſhe had the latent prudence to refuſe him her hand; but not till the ſtory, improved by a thouſand happy additions,

additions, had circulated through all the fashionable world, and rendered her the ridicule and common-place topic of half the town. Whether nature will at last awaken in her breast the dormant affections of a mother, and, concentrating her thoughts in the family of Frederic, teach her to despise the follies of high life and the temptations of pleasure; or whether, on the other hand, still guided by her wonted fondness for dissipation, she will again launch forward into the vortex of gaiety, and perhaps form an attachment to some other worthless character, on whom she may lavish the wealth to which Lord Cressey has

has ſo fair a claim, time, and time alone, can determine.

Both Frederic and the Duke of Annan wiſhed to have obtained for Mr. Darewell ſome preferment of dignity and importance; but he refuſed to deſert his much-loved pariſh of Dawliſh, where he had paſſed ſo many years reſpected, loved, and eſteemed; the ſcene of his ſhort-lived enjoyment of domeſtic bliſs, of his ſacred grief, and of the growing virtues of Frederic and Charlotte. Each, however, inſiſted that he ſhould accept an annuity of £. 500, as a ſymbol of their laſting regard and heartfelt gratitude. Repeatedly urged to agree to this propoſition,

poſition, Mr. Darewell at length declared, that he would prove the high opinion he entertained of both in conſenting to their generous propoſition. "I have never yet," ſaid he, "in a long life of ſeventy years, "condeſcended to accept a pecuni-"ary favour from any man. In "making this firſt, this ſingular "exception to my general rule, I "wiſh to ſhew to the world, that "there are men, though they are "rarely met with, to whom it is "an honour to be indebted. As for "this increaſe of income, the only "real ſatisfaction I ſhall derive from "it, for my wants are but few, will "be, that, as your almoner, I ſhall "have the luxury of relieving the

diſtreſſed,

"diſtreſſed, the unfortunate, and
"the fatherleſs. In thus enabling
"me to diſtribute your bounty, you
"do indeed afford me a ſenſible gra-
"tification."

Determined to ſcatter round him the ſeeds of happineſs, Frederic remembered that he had ſome humbler friends, to whoſe welfare he ought alſo to attend. Mrs. Martin, who in his early youth had ſaved his life at Weſtminſter, by her tender attentions when he was neglected and abandoned by his mother, he enquired after with ſolicitude; and finding that the boarding houſe which ſhe kept had failed, and that ſhe was in conſiderable diſtreſs, he ſettled on her an handſome annuity,

nuity, and thus ſweetened the evening of life to a worthy and ſuffering female.

Deborah, the faithful Deborah, who, originally the nurſe, was afterwards the attendant of Charlotte, by whoſe interceſſion it will be recollected Frederic had firſt an opportunity of "telling his love," was not forgotten. She was offered a ſimilar gratuity, but the poor creature knew of no happineſs equal to that of waiting on her miſtreſs, and it was at laſt ſettled, that ſhe ſhould be houſekeeper to the family in London, with a liberal ſalary, by which means ſhe would be able to ſpend the half of every year under the immediate eye of her adored lady.

There was ſtill another perſon, who, though ſhe had injured, had once been loved by Frederic. This, according to his romantic ideas of generoſity, gave her a claim to his exertions, and he determined to enquire whether the imprudent Lady Ann Routley was in any diſtreſs. He ſoon learnt that, abandoned by her unfeeling ſeducer, ſhe had experienced all the ſad viciſſitudes of fortune, to which the lives of thoſe who are very improperly called *Women of Pleaſure* are daily ſubject, and that ſhe was at this time a priſoner in the Fleet, with ſcarcely the common neceſſaries of life. Lord Creſſey entreated Mr. Darewell to go to that ſcene of wretchedneſs, to re-

lieve the unfortunate victim of vicious education, and to entreat her acceptance of an annuity of two hundred per annum, only ſubject to one condition, that ſhe ſhould abandon her former mode of life, and ſhould retire to ſome diſtant county. The venerable Mr. Darewell, ever ready to aſſiſt the unfortunate, did not think this commiſſion unbecoming his character, and undertook it with readineſs. He found the once elegant Lady Ann lying on a miſerable bed half made of ſtraw, in a comfortleſs garret at the ſummit of the priſon. The winter was far advanced, ſhe had no fire, ſcarcely any clothes; and wretched as were the rags which ſerved her as blankets,

they were reſorted to as the only ſhelter againſt the weather. When Mr. Darewell, with his uſual goodneſs, unfolded to her the object of his viſit, ſhe could ſcarcely believe the reality of what ſhe heard. Hope had long deprived her of its flattering protection, and, driven to deſpair, death was the only relief ſhe aſked or expected. Darewell appeared ſome guardian angel, and it was long before her agitated ſenſes could be perſuaded that the ſuccour now offered, was not ſome cruel jeſt practiſed to increaſe her miſery. When ſhe heard to whom ſhe was to owe her liberty, ſhe exclaimed with frantic violence—"Latimer's "curſes I could have endured, but

"his

"his generoſity wounds me to the "ſoul. My heart now feels the in-"jury I meditated, in its blackeſt "hue, and every ſentiment of gra-"titude I wiſh to expreſs, riſes up "in condemnation of my former ini-"quity." Darewell conſoled the trembling penitent with the mildneſs of his words, and the comforts of religion. When, at laſt, ſhe was ſufficiently recovered, he removed her from the gaol, and had her lodged and provided with every convenience at an hôtel, till a retreat could be found for her in the country. By the unwearied pains of that worthy man, a ſituation was procured in a clergyman's family far diſtant from London, and Lord

Creſſey's liberal allowance, which is often increaſed by preſents at different periods of the year, enables her to live with comfort, and to obſerve the prudence and propriety, which have been ſo dearly taught her in the ſchool of adverſity. From her Mr. Darewell was informed, that the Baronet, after ſucceeding to the jointure of his mother, who died four years ſince, had ſoon loſt that alſo at a celebrated race at Newmarket, in which the *knowing ones* were taken in. He then entered deeply into the conſpiracies of Mr. Wiſeman, who was become more deſperate than ever, owing to the death of Lady Steel, and the conſequent deprivation of her fortune.

Having

Having at laſt ventured to forge a will, by which an eſtate was pretended to have been bequeathed to Sir William, the fraud was on the trial of the cauſe diſcovered. The Baronet eſcaped by getting out of court in time. He mounted one of his fleeteſt horſes, galloped to the water-ſide, and embarked on board a Guineaman juſt ſailing for the coaſt of Affica. From thence, in a ſlave ſhip, he commenced his paſſage to the Weſt Indies, in hopes of getting employment in ſome of the iſlands, or exerciſing his uſual talents in defrauding the officers quartered there. On the voyage he was ſeized with one of thoſe fe-

vers

vers ſo prevalent in ſhips of this deſcription, and thus ended his miſerable career. Mr. Wiſeman, having had the effrontery to ſtay in Weſtminſter Hall whilſt the validity of the will was diſcuſſing which he had fabricated, was taken on the ſpot, and committed to Newgate, in order to be tried at the next Old Bailey Seſſions, for a capital crime never pardoned, and on evidence which admits of no doubt.—Mr. Darewell alſo learnt from her unfortunate daughter, that Lady Gameſhire, after having had her Pharo table deſtroyed by the magiſtrates, was left without any means of exiſtence (for her fortune had long

ſince

ſince been conſumed) and loaded with debt, had retired to Italy, where it was ſuppoſed ſhe had been either killed or taken priſoner by the French.

Lord Creſſey having, by every method in his power, ſecured the happineſs of thoſe with whom he was in any degree connected, ſaw at length the day arrive which was to perfect his own. From the venerable Mr. Darewell, ſanctioned by the approving preſence of the Duke and Duchess of Annan, he received the hand of his faithful Charlotte, and immediately ſet out for Dawliſh, the ſeat of his early love.

Edward Deering was, at the ſame time,

time, united to the object of his choice, and after the ceremony commenced his journey to Yorkſhire, in order to take poſſeſſion of the living to which he had been ſo generouſly preſented by his noble friend.

Frederic welcomed the morning of his felicity by a ſplendid act of charity. On coming to the title of Creſſey, he had left the Guards, and had been appointed to the command of a regiment of Militia. The purchaſe money of his commiſſion, he directed to be diſtributed amongſt the widows and orphans of the gallant ſailors who had died, "as his brave father fell," in the cauſe of their

their country; and a ſecond victory gained by his friend Sir George Ardent, afforded objects for his munificence.

THE END.

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